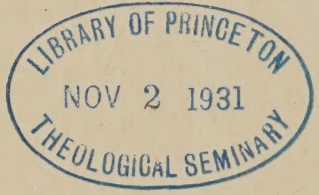

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The Spirit-led life

"If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk (step by step) by the Spirit" (Gal. 5. 25).

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THE SPIRIT-LED LIFE

FORTY SIMPLE CHAPTERS ON
THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS
OF LIFE AND WALK
BY THE SPIRIT
OF GOD

BY
GEORGE GOODMAN
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Preface

It is not my purpose to write a theological treatise upon the Holy Spirit.

There are such already, most able and exhaustive, but they are only read by scholars or those who have leisure.

My aim is rather to help the many earnest seekers who have no time for close study, yet desire to know so much of the great subject as will enable them to rejoice in a sure but simple groundwork of Scripture truth, to walk in the Spirit, and to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit to the glory of God.

The subject has, in many minds, been confused by diverse and uncertain voices, vague and unscriptural words and phrases, and many alleged "experiences," both extravagant and misleading. The result has been that many have been led to believe that the receiving of the Spirit is an exceptional and somewhat rare experience, the possession of a few advanced souls, or more than usually "surrendered" saints, instead of the common inheritance of every true believer.

Indeed, the truth has been so misrepresented that the grace of God has been turned to a legal transaction. The cart has been put before the horse. Thus the believer is called upon to make a full sur-

render in order to receive the Spirit, rather than, having received the Spirit "by the hearing of faith" (Gal. 3. 2), to walk by that Spirit that He may bow the heart and will in full surrender to Christ. It is the incoming of the Spirit that brings about the surrender of heart and life, constrained by dying love, and not the surrender that earns or wins the gift of the Spirit.

My plan is to treat each point in a short, simple chapter, easy to read and to grasp, and thus in a sequence of papers to cover the main truths of the subject, so that "he who reads may run," not straining after undefined experiences, but quietly and with purpose of heart walking in the obedience of faith and love to Christ, taught and led by the Spirit.

Thus and thus alone will the fruit of the Spirit be manifested in life.

The gracious Lord add His blessing.

GEORGE GOODMAN.

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Tunbridge Wells.

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PART I

THE FACT OF THE SPIRIT

THE FACT OF THE SPIRIT.

"It came to pass that. . . Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given" (Acts 19. 1, 2, R.V.).

* * * * *

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke 11. 13).

THE SPIRIT-LED LIFE

CHAPTER I

The Fact and the Experience

THE Apostle Paul finding certain disciples at Ephesus, detected with that keen spiritual discernment that marked him, that there was something vitally lacking with them.

The mark of a true Christian is that he has received the Spirit of God. Indeed, if he has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His, and in this case that witness was missing. So he inquired how it was. "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" he asked; and in reply learned that they had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," or as in the R.V., did not know that He was given. Further inquiry showed that they had only learned so far as John the Baptist had taught.

This of course was much, for John had been commissioned to proclaim that Jesus was the Son of God; that He was the Lamb of God who bore away the sin of the world; that He would baptise with the Holy Ghost and with fire; but while he thus prepared the way of the Lord, he was not permitted to live to see

the latter part of his teaching fulfilled at Pentecost, and these disciples of his had not even learned that the fulfilment had taken place.

Being a prepared people, however, they were ready to receive the truth; and believing on Him of whom John spoke, they received the Holy Ghost according to His promise. The condition of these twelve disciples is in many respects like that of numbers who profess and call themselves Christians in the present day. They know indeed that the Bible tells of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but what relation this fact has to them they know not. They are like those who have not so much as heard the real truth as to this momentous fact, and have never been numbered among those on whom the Holy Ghost has come, as on those of whom we read (4. 6).

The experience of these Ephesian disciples was subsequently twofold:

1. They learned *the fact.*
2. They received *the Spirit.*

May it be so with those who read these pages.

The Fact is that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Deity, has graciously been sent by the Father to abide with and in His people. The Holy Ghost has been baptised from Heaven. He is present in the world in a manner not theretofore true and may be received as a gracious indwelling guest.

The Experience is a real and precious one. It shall be my part to open up the Scriptures that tell how the Spirit may be received and enjoyed, and in what various manifestations.

It is said of the godly Fletcher of Madeley, that he was once lecturing to his students on the subject of the office and work of the Holy Spirit. After the lecture was concluded he said: "And now, let those who desire to know these things in experience follow me," and he led them to a room, where together they spent some hours in earnest prayer.

The Lord Jesus said when speaking of prayer (Luke 11. 13): "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

Some who have learned to know God the Father by faith in Christ Jesus, have hesitated to plead this gracious promise. They have received the Spirit, why then ask for Him?

This is true, but surely our Lord Jesus knew this when He encouraged the children of the Heavenly Father to ask thus for the Holy Spirit.

The absence of the article "the" makes it read, "Ask Holy Spirit," and would seem to imply, as one says, "His best gift—His Holy Spirit—in all the various and fitting manifestations of His guidance and consolation and searching in our lives" (Alford).

Of these we never know enough in experience. Let us then begin these studies and continue them, praying in the Spirit for a deeper, fuller, truer infilling of the Holy Spirit, that we may be "filled with all the fulness of God."

We love to meet the needs of our children; how much more will our Heavenly Father supply that without which a life that pleases Him is impossible.

THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE SPIRIT.

"The Lord God and His Spirit hath sent Me" (R.V.: "The Lord God hath sent Me and His Spirit."). "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God" (Isa. 48. 16).

* * * * *

"Baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28. 19).

* * * * *

"The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." (2 Cor. 13. 14).

CHAPTER II

The Personality and Deity of the Spirit

THE Holy Spirit is both a Person and God. It is true that we have "the mind of Christ," and in that moral sense being "renewed in the spirit of our minds," have the spirit of Christ in so far as we display in our conduct a likeness to Him.

But happy as this may be, it does not satisfy the Scriptures that speak of our receiving, being filled with and walking by the Spirit.

The disposition of Christ is not all that is intended. True, it is the result of receiving and walking in the Holy Ghost, but the Spirit is not merely "a sweet influence" or "savour of Christ," He produces and imparts these, as the hymn says: "He came sweet influence to impart." But He Himself is "A Gracious Heavenly Guest," a Living, Loving Person.

The fact of His Personality is established by direct statement and by the use of language that could not be applied to a mere influence. He is called in 2 Corinthians 3. 18 (R.V.), *"The Lord the Spirit."* For as truly as the Father is "the Lord God," and as Christ is "Lord of All," so is He the Spirit, "The Lord the Spirit."

For this reason we were baptised "in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28. 19), and receive the benediction of, "The

Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost" (2 Cor. 13. 14).

He is said to "speak," to "bear witness," to "strive," none of which are true of an impersonal influence. He may be "grieved," "tempted," and "lied to." We read of His love (Rom. 15. 30), His power, His mind (Rom. 8. 27). He teaches, brings to remembrance, sheds love abroad in the heart, guides and shows things to come, He takes the things of Christ and shows them to us. These are all the actions of a Divine Person and not an influence.

As we look through the Acts of the Apostles (not inappropriately termed by some "The Acts of the Holy Ghost") we come across such passages as these: "Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot" (8. 29). "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (8. 39). "While Peter thought on these things the Spirit said unto him, Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore and get thee down and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them" (10. 19, 20). Which Peter repeating says, "The Spirit bade me go with them nothing doubting." And of Paul and Silas we read: "They assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not" (16. 7), and this after having been "forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia" (v. 6).

Such passages leave us in no doubt as to the fact that we have to do not with an influence or condition of mind merely, but with One whose Personality is revealed in His Love, His Power, His Word of direction, restraint, and teaching—The Eternal Spirit.

From the benediction above quoted we learn that while Love is attributed to God, Grace to Christ, it is *Communion or Fellowship* that is mentioned of the Holy Spirit.

It is His special office to bring about the Unity of the Spirit, that is, the Oneness that characterises all who are in Christ and are walking by the Spirit.

The oft-repeated prayer of our Lord Jesus in John 17. 21, "That they all may be one," was answered in the gift and work of the Holy Spirit, Who when He came baptised all believers into the One Body (1 Cor. 12. 13), and maintains in them the unity of the Spirit and of the Faith (Eph. 4. 13), manifested in the sevenfold oneness of Ephesians 4. 3-6.

THE NAMES AND TITLES OF THE SPIRIT

"The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1. 2).

* * * * *

"Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6. 3).

* * * * *

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20. 22).

* * * * *

"It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father" (Matt. 10. 20).

* * * * *

"He shall give you another Paraclete (Comforter) . . . even the Spirit of Truth" (John 14. 16).

* * * * *

"The Eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9. 14).

CHAPTER III

The Names and Titles of the Spirit

THE first reference to the Holy Spirit in the Bible is in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis: "The Spirit of God was brooding (R.V., *m.*) upon the face of the waters." The next is in chapter 6. 3, where we read: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

Thus the Spirit is introduced to us as "My Spirit," "The Spirit of God," and throughout the Old Testament He is called "The Spirit of Jehovah." Isaiah refers to Him in the terms used so often by the Lord: His "Holy Spirit" (63. 10, 11).

In Isaiah 48. 16 we have a direct reference to His association with the Father and the Son, where Messiah speaks thus: "The Lord God and His Spirit hath sent Me . . . thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." When our Lord Jesus, in the farewell in the upper room, promised to send the Spirit, He used a title which up to that time had not appeared in the New Testament, "*Paracletos.*" The Comforter, as it is translated in John's Gospel, where it comes four times. In the first Epistle of John (2. 1) the only other occurrence is found, and this time with reference not to the Spirit, but to the Lord Jesus at the right hand of the Father, where it is translated "Advocate,"

"We have an Advocate (*Paracletos*) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." The word means, "One called to help as being able and willing to do so." The fact that the term is applied both to the Risen Christ and to the Holy Spirit assists us to understand the meaning.

There are two Paracletes—One with the Father: One from the Father. One in Heaven appearing there for us; One in the believer appearing there for Christ. It is as though there were an exchange of ambassadors at the two courts, each occupied with the concerns of those for whom He appears.

Our case is in the hands of Christ, who represents us in Heaven. If we sin, as, alas, we may, we are exceedingly comforted with the knowledge that we have a Paraclete with the Father; and the ascended Lord has His representative with and in us to represent Him, to reign on the throne of our hearts as viceregent of Him whom we "sanctify as Lord in our hearts," to make known His will, to supply His strength, and to minister His comfort. "We have a Paraclete with the Father," and Jesus said, "I will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever" (John 14. 16).

Two other names are used by the Lord Jesus of this gracious Paraclete. They are *"The Holy Ghost"* (John 14. 26), a term He used twice before and twice after His resurrection. First, in Luke 11. 13 and John 12. 26, quoted above, and after, when breathing on His disciples He said, *"Receive ye the Holy Ghost"* (John 20. 22), an anticipation of Pentecost; and at His ascension, where He said, "Ye shall receive

power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1. 8).

This word "Holy" suffices to remind us of the character of the One of whom we speak. The second title used by the Lord is *"The Spirit of Truth"* (John 14. 17; 15. 26; and 16. 13), no doubt intended to impress us with this great characteristic, that He is true, the Faithful Witness of Him who is the Truth. Our Lord also once speaks of "The Spirit of your Father," by which they should speak (Matt. 10. 20); and "the Spirit of God" (Matt. 12. 18), by which He cast out devils.

Other titles we shall have occasion to refer to later. Each of them adds to our conception of the Glory of the Person: the Eternal Spirit, the Spirit of Life, the Spirit of Adoption, and the Spirit of Glory and of God.

Let us remember, then, that just as God is Love, so the Spirit is Love, and as God is Light so the Spirit is Light; that in all things He partakes of the nature of Him who sent Him. And remembering this, think not of a doctrine only, but that He, the Lord the Spirit, is a Living, Present, Abiding Presence, with whom we may enjoy "the Communion of the Holy Ghost."

CHRIST AND THE SPIRIT.

"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35).

* * * * *

"Lo, the Heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him" (Matt. 3. 16).

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 10. 38).

* * * * *

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit . . . to be tempted" (Matt. 4. 1).

* * * * *

"Christ . . . through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto God" (Heb. 9. 14).

CHAPTER IV

Christ and the Spirit

IT is a source of no little comfort and joy to know that the Lord Jesus in the days of His flesh enjoyed the Communion of the Holy Spirit, was led by and walked in that Spirit, just as we are called to do.

The life of faith is impossible apart from the Spirit of God, and since Christ is the great "Author and Finisher of Faith," that is the One who began, continued, and ended a life of perfect dependence and obedience while He sojourned here; He was equipped for that life and walk and service by the same Spirit.

In this He is our example that we may follow His steps. We are told that we should "walk even as He walked." Not, of course, doing what He was called to do and suffer, for the will of God for us is different, but living and acting upon the same principles as those on which He acted.

He walked in the path of faith, in lowly dependence and perfect obedience. He knew no other Authority than the Word of God, the Sacred Scriptures. He sought no other object than the will of God. He went about doing good, He pleased not Himself, He suffered in the will of God, and did always those things that pleased God. This He did by the Spirit, and this we who follow His steps should do in the same power.

It will help us to understand the nature and work of the Holy Spirit if we look upon Him, the Sinless One, as He walked.

1. First, we learn of Him that He was *Conceived of the Holy Ghost* (Matt. 1. 10). "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee (Mary) and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35). This is the great mystery of Godliness, the great wonder of God, that He whose goings forth have been of old from everlasting should be "manifest in flesh."

2. At His baptism we read He was *Anointed with the Holy Ghost* (Acts 10. 38). The Spirit of God descending like a Dove and lighting upon Him. So that He could apply to Himself the words of Isaiah 61. 1, 2: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel," etc., adding as He resumed His seat that day in the Synagogue at Nazareth: "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

3. "Then," also we read, "was Jesus *led up of the Spirit* . . . to be tempted of the Devil." In Mark 1. 12 the word used is "driven," while in Luke 4. 1 we are told He was "full of the Holy Ghost" when He was so led. It was in the power of that Spirit He overcame, using the Sword of the Spirit (the Word of God) each time to meet the fiery darts of the enemy. "It is written." It was in the power of the Spirit of God that He returned from that great conflict to resume His work in Galilee (Luke 4. 14).

4. It was by the Spirit of God that *He cast out*

devils (Matt. 12. 28). He said that His works were not His own. The Father dwelling in Him, He did the works. They were works, not self-chosen, but given Him to do of the Father, and wrought through Him by the Spirit.

5. It was through the Eternal Spirit that *He offered Himself without spot to God* (Heb. 9. 14). Though His life was not taken from Him, but laid down freely, yet it was at the commandment of the Father and in the power of the Spirit.

6. It was the Spirit of God *that raised Him up from the dead* (Rom. 8. 11). He was "put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3. 18).

7. It is the same Spirit that *He promised to send from Heaven* upon His people. "Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1. 5). This promise we will consider in our next chapter.

THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT.

"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive; because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you" (John 14. 16, 17).

* * * * *

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you" (John 14. 26).

* * * * *

"When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me" (John 15. 26).

* * * * *

"If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" (John 16. 7).

CHAPTER V

The Promise of the Spirit

"HENCEFORTH know we Christ so (after the flesh) no more" (2 Cor. 5. 16), wrote the Apostle. This agrees with the words of the Lord when He said: "It is expedient that I go away."

Why expedient? Why better for us that He should go? So that the knowledge of Him "after the flesh" should cease and the knowledge that is by the Spirit should begin.

"After the flesh," but few could be near Him, few hear His voice, or see Him. He was not, after the flesh, in more than one place at a time (though Himself omnipresent), and those who should believe on Him in distant lands could never have seen Him if He could be seen and known only "after the flesh."

But now, by the Spirit, all may *see* Him crowned with glory and honour (Heb. 2. 9). All may *know* Him from the least to the greatest (Heb. 8. 11), all may *have communion* with Him by the Holy Ghost.

Yes, that He might say to each one: "Lo, I am with you alway," it was necessary that He should go away that the Spirit might come and reveal Him to faith in every heart.

After His resurrection He walked with two on the way to Emmaus, but they did not know Him "after the flesh"—their eyes were holden. Why? That they might know Him as He is revealed to faith in the Scriptures by the Spirit.

So He opened to them the Scriptures and showed them Himself there, and anticipating the work of the Spirit, opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and so their "hearts burned within them" with love to, and joy in, Him and His finished work.

So the Lord Jesus promised the Spirit. He used four expressions:

"I will pray the Father and He will send" (14. 16).

"Whom the Father will send in My Name" (14. 26).

"I will send from the Father" (15. 26).

"I will send Him unto you" (16. 7).

This Holy Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, was—

1. *To abide and be in us* (14. 17). Not to visit on special occasions, as in the Old Testament, "clothing Himself" with men, as He did then, for special objects only, but to be a Continuing Guest never to be taken away when once received.

2. *To teach and bring to remembrance* (14. 26) all the precious things He had taught in the days of His flesh, and should thereafter teach, enabling the inspired writers to record them for all time in the Holy Oracles.

3. *To testify of Him* (15. 26), using the Sacred Scriptures written and to be written to make known to His people the unsearchable riches of Christ, to manifest to them His glory (2 Cor. 3. 18), enlightening

their eyes that with unveiled face they may behold that glory, and be transformed by it.

4. *To convict the world* (16. 8) as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

5. *To guide in the truth* (16. 13), for man not only needs the revelation of truth, but guidance in it. And this truth will be, not as from the Spirit Himself, but what He hears from the Divine Lord, whose Advocate He is, that He will speak (16. 13).

The Spirit in the Scriptures does speak "of Himself," but not "from Himself." He is the Agent, the Executor of Another. It is Christ who speaks by the Spirit.

6. *"He will shew you things to come."* In the Scriptures, then still to be written, many things would be revealed of the future, as, for example, in the glorious Apocalypse of John on the Isle of Patmos.

7. *He will glorify Christ* (16. 14). For the Spirit is not our Saviour. He does not take the place in the heart of the believer, the first place, that Christ must have; but rather delights to reveal the glories of our Lord and Saviour, taking of His and showing them to us so that, forgetting the Agent, we delight in and look unto Jesus the Captain of our salvation.

OUR LORD'S SIMILES OF THE SPIRIT

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3. 8).

* * * * *

"He would have given thee living water. . .The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well (spring) of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4. 10-14).

* * * * *

"He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, but this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7. 38, 39).

CHAPTER VI

Our Lord's Similes of the Spirit

I.—THE WIND

ALTHOUGH the Lord had not yet given the promise of the Spirit, nevertheless in His ministry He spoke of His work and gave some teaching concerning Him. This will help us to understand the operation of the Spirit, which we have to consider later.

The three passages quoted on the opposite page contain *three figures of the Spirit* used by our Lord Jesus.

To Nicodemus He spoke of His work in REGENERATION under the figure of the WIND.

To the Woman of Samaria He spoke of His work in SANCTIFICATION under the figure of a WELL, having in it a spring of Living Water that welled up with Everlasting Life.

On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles He spoke of His work in SERVICE under the figure of an OVERFLOWING RIVER that went out from the believer.

We of course need to know all these operations of the Spirit, for we are called to salvation, sanctification, and service. Notice the simplicity and beauty of each figure. How exactly and aptly they apply!

THE WIND. The following facts are true of the wind, and may without in the least straining the metaphor be said of the Spirit:

(*a*) *It is from Heaven.* Often we read in Scripture of the "winds of Heaven" (Dan. 7. 2; 8. 8; 11. 4; Zech. 2. 6). So we must be born "from above" (John 3. 7, R.V.), by the Spirit from Heaven.

(*b*) *It is unseen.* So of the Spirit we read: "Whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him not."

(*c*) *It is inscrutable.* It blows where it lists; none can tell whence it comes or whither it goes. So the sovereignty of God is manifest in the giving of the Spirit (John 1. 13).

(*d*) *It can be heard.* "Thou hearest the sound thereof." So the Spirit is said to speak, and we are bidden to "hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." It is by the Word of God and the Gospel that the Spirit is heard.

(*e*) *It is powerful.* It strives upon the waters, it uproots the trees, and even the rocks are rent by it. So mighty, too, is the Spirit, "living and powerful."

(*f*) *Its workings can be seen.* As the trees of the wood are bowed before it, so are men's hearts and lives by the operation of the Spirit.

(*g*) *It was the means of giving life.* God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul (Gen. 2. 7). So in Ezekiel's great vision of Israel's new birth (ch. 37. 1-14), the prophet, having prophesied to the dry bones, was after bidden: "Prophesy unto the wind. Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live . . . and they lived."

How rich in meaning then is the simile used by the Lord of the operation of the Holy Spirit in regeneration!

We shall discuss the work of the Spirit in regeneration later. It is only the Lord's figure of it that we are concerned with now.

THE WELL OF LIVING WATER.

"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4. 14).

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"Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it" (Num. 21. 17).

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"A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters" (Song of Solomon 4. 15).

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"A good man shall be satisfied from himself" (Prov. 14. 14).

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"All my fountains are in Thee" (Psa. 87. 7, R.V.).

CHAPTER VII

Our Lord's Similes of the Spirit

II.—THE WELL OF LIVING WATER

WATER is a figure that is reserved in Scripture as a type of the Spirit. It is also used as a symbol of the Word (the Spirit's Sword). Some one has suggested a distinction, thus: When living (or springing and flowing) water is mentioned, it is the Spirit; when still water, as for cleansing, it is the Word of God.

Thus in the laver in the Tabernacle we have the two figures combined. It was made of two parts, the laver and its foot. No doubt the laver was a reservoir, with taps leading from it, so that the water flowed; and the foot was the basin below into which it fell, and in which the feet and hands were washed before service in the holy places.

It is referred to as "the laver of regeneration" in Titus 3. 5, regeneration being the operation of the Spirit by the Word, so that the man is born of *the Spirit*, and not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by *the Word* of God (1 Peter 1. 23), the Spirit and the Word each bearing its part in the life-giving operation.

The Lord Jesus never called Himself the Water of Life, but He said that He gave it. The Water, that is the Spirit, is His gift.

And wherever we read of the "Water of Life" we understand by it the Life-Giving Spirit.

When the Rock (Christ) was smitten the water flowed from it and the people drank and lived.

Drinking, then, is a figure of receiving the Spirit. "We were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12. 13, R.V.).

Christ invited any man who thirsted to come to Him and drink, the water being explained thus: "This spake He of the Spirit" (John 7. 39). And the final appeal of the Bible is: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22. 17).

So the Lord Jesus spoke of the Spirit as "Living Water" (John 4. 10; 7. 38) and "the Water that I shall give him." That Water, He said, would so quench the thirst that the drinker thereof "would never thirst again" (John 4. 14).

And this is true of the Spirit, who by His witness to Christ and supply of His power and love abundantly satisfies the deepest need and longing of the heart.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold, I freely give
The living Water. Thirsty one,
Stoop down and drink and live.'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving Stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him."

This gift of the Spirit the Lord likened to a living spring of water, a well in which was a boundless supply. The springing water is life—eternal life—communicated by the Spirit and maintained in the

believer by that same Spirit, so that life ever springs up and prevails in him—life that is life indeed, life more abundant. So is fulfilled the promise of Proverbs 14. 14: "A good man shall be satisfied from himself."

What are in practice these upspringings of life? They are convictions (John 16. 8), desires and enablings (Phil. 2. 13), and inexpressible groanings (Rom. 8. 26), of which we shall say more later.

This upspringing source and fountain of New Life then brings the believer

1. *Satisfaction.* He never thirsts again. He has by the Spirit a source of heart rest and content in Christ, that satisfies his deepest longings.

> "Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
> More than all in Thee I find."

2. *Supply of Grace.* For unless the well is choked, it never ceases to spring up.

3. *Springs of Fresh Suggestion.* Desire and exercise of heart. "All my fresh springs are in Thee" (Psalm 87. 7).

THE OVERFLOWING RIVERS.

"Thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink" (Exodus 17. 6).

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"He that believeth on Me, ... out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; but this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive" (John 7. 38, 39).

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"The Lord shall . . . satisfy thy soul in drought . . . and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58. 11).

* * * * *

"Everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Ezekiel 47. 9).

CHAPTER VIII

Our Lord's Similes of the Spirit

III.—THE OVERFLOWING RIVERS

THE last day of the Feast of Tabernacles—the octave—was remarkable for its striking ceremonial. It was "the great day of the feast" (John 7. 37), "an holy convocation."

On that day a procession from the Temple proceeded to the Pool of Siloam, or King's Pool (Neh. 2. 14), where the priest filled the golden pitcher from its waters, then returning with the throng, he arrived at the time of the morning sacrifice When the pieces of the offering were arranged on the altar, the water was poured on to the sacrifice to the sounding of the silver trumpets, after which the Great Hallel (Psa. 113 to 118) was sung. So great was the manifestation of joy on this day that it was said: "He who had not seen it had never known real joy."

This outpouring of water was by the Israelites regarded as a symbol of that outpouring of the Spirit promised by Isaiah (58. 11), Ezekiel (47. 1-9, and 39. 29), Joel (2. 28), and others of their prophets. As they saw the water outpoured on the sacrifice they anticipated the great day when the Spirit should be poured on them from on high.

The Lord Jesus therefore instructed them in the truth of the great subject. Note the points:

1. *He Himself was the Sacrifice*; for until He was glorified in death and resurrection (v. 39) the Spirit was not to be given.

2. *But when He was glorified, then would be the outpouring* of the Spirit from on high.

3. *To receive that Spirit they must "Come to Him and drink"* (v. 37), which is explained (v. 38) as believing in Him.

4. *When received, that Spirit would be as rivers of Living Waters* flowing from the inner being of the believer.

This figure of rivers of living water is not infrequent in Scripture. We have it—

(*a*) *In the story of the Smitten Rock* (Exod. 17). Wonderful type of the suffering of Christ when made a curse for us, for after His death the Spirit was outpoured, as from the Smitten Rock the waters gushed forth. "He opened the rock and the waters gushed out: they ran in dry places like a river" (Psa. 105. 41).

(*b*) *In the waters issuing from the Temple of Ezekiel*, ever deepening and widening in their flow, till they became "a river that I could not pass over," with such blessed properties that "everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Ezekiel 47. 1-5).

(*c*) *In the final glories of the Book of Revelation.* "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (22. 1).

(*d*) *And in many promises.* "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.

I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed and My blessing upon their offering; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses" (Isa. 44. 3, 4). "Thou shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58. 11).

So that the promise was indeed as the Lord added: "As the Scripture hath said." Such is to be the blessing of the Spirit in service. "Out of Him shall flow rivers of Living Water."

This will be true of:

1. *His Lips.* "The mouth of the righteous man is a well of life" (Prov. 10. 11). "The lips of the righteous feed many" (Prov. 10. 21).

2. *His Compassion.* "Having compassion one of another" (1 Peter 3. 8).

3. *His Good Works.* "As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men."

For God not only blesses His people but makes them a blessing.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

"When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2. 1-4).

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"Peter said, This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh" (vv. 16, 17).

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"Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (v. 38).

CHAPTER IX

The Day of Pentecost

OUR Christian faith rests on historical facts. In this it differs from all religions which are theories, ceremonies, ethics, or morals only. Our faith depends on great events that fell out in "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." They are chiefly four. The fact—

1. *That God has visited this earth,* being incarnate "God manifest in the flesh" in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

2. *That sin has been righteously dealt with at the Cross,* when the Son of God offered Himself without spot to God and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

3. *That He rose the third day from the dead,* and lives as Prince and Saviour at the right hand of God.

4. *That the Holy Ghost was baptised from Heaven,* and in condescending grace now makes His permanent abode in the bodies of believers.

This last great historical fact now claims our attention.

Foretold by the prophets, promised by the Lord, the disciples were told to tarry at Jerusalem till it should take place. The event took place as promised, and is described in Acts 2. Let us consider it in three aspects.

1. The baptism (or outpouring) of the Spirit.
2. The experience following.
3. The promise to all believers.

I.—THE BAPTISM OR OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT.

(*a*) First, note *the time chosen.* The Jewish year contained a series of great events or feasts. They were typical in their progression, and show the purpose and order of God in our salvation. Some have already been fulfilled; others (those of the seventh month) remain yet to be accomplished (see Lev. ch. 23).

The first was *Passover,* which, the N.T. explains to us, sets forth the death of Christ. "For even Christ our Passover hath been sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5. 7). This was followed by *the Feast of Unleavened Bread,* which the same Scriptures explains as the life of "sincerity and truth" that follows the faith in Christ as our Passover—the "leaven of malice and wickedness" being purged out, "as we are unleavened" (1 Cor. 5. 7, 8).

On the day after the first day of that feast (that is, the third day from the Passover) (Lev. 23. 11), there was the *waving of the sheaf before the Lord,* typical of the resurrection of Christ; the firstfruits of them that sleep, on the third day after His death; then after seven Sabbaths (fifty days, Lev. 23. 16) came *Pentecost,* when the beginning of harvest, the two wave loaves of the firstfruits, were waved before the Lord. This of course typified the beginning of the Gospel harvest, and it was therefore on this great day that the Holy Ghost was shed forth and the harvest of precious souls (3000 that day) began to be gathered in.

(*b*) Then observe *the place.* It was in the Temple Court (the "House," v. 2, a word constantly used of "the House of God," the Temple). This is evident from the context, for the multitude heard the sound (v. 6, R.V.) and came together in thousands, and all heard in their own tongues.

(*c*) Next, recall *the appearance.* "A mighty rushing *wind*" was heard that filled the place. The *cloven tongues of fire* sat on each of them: two striking manifestations, each symbolic of the work of the Spirit, as we have already seen—the wind in regeneration, the tongues of fire in testimony.

(*d*) *The Explanation.* Peter plainly states that what had taken place was the *Pouring Out of the Spirit of God* (2. 17), or as it is called elsewhere the Baptism of the Spirit. As promised of God, "I will pour out in those days of My Spirit."

(*e*) *The Immediate Result.* In the fulness of the Spirit that they had received the Apostles spoke with tongues. Not, note, an unrecognisable jargon, but in the languages wherein all the differing nationalities had been born (v. 8); they each "heard them speak in their own language" (v. 6).

Never in Scripture is the word "unknown" used of tongues. It is always in italics in the A.V. of 1 Corinthians 14, showing that it is not in the original. That chapter always refers to a tongue that can be interpreted by another (v. 28), that is "easy to be understood" (v. 9); that is to edification when so interpreted (v. 11, 12); and is a sign to them that are without, in that they heard in their own language, and not to believers (v. 22).

II.—THE EXPERIENCE FOLLOWING.

The result of this outpouring or baptising of the Spirit from Heaven is described thus: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (v. 4).

So that the historical event was the baptism of the Spirit, the experience of the individuals, the filling with the Holy Ghost. Of the import of this the next chapter will treat.

III.—THE PROMISE TO ALL BELIEVERS.

The Gospel was that day preached for the first time with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven.

The testimony to the death and resurrection of Christ (v. 22-35) was followed by the application: "Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus Whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ" (v. 36).

Here was the startling fact. *"Jesus is Lord,"* the Risen One Whom they had slain.

The result was deep conviction and the inquiry, "What shall we do?" The answer is clear. Two steps to be followed by two blessings: Repent and be baptised in the Name of Jesus Christ, and the two great blessings of the Gospel will follow—

1. The remission of sins.
2. The receiving of the Holy Ghost.

No Gospel is complete that presents less than this. Not remission or the putting away of sins only, but "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

To preach the Cross without the Gift of the Holy Spirit is like bringing a pardon to a prisoner and leaving him still in prison.

To present life to the unreconciled that is the power of the Holy Spirit without the Blood, is to invite man to continue in independence of God.

This is what John means in the passage, *"This is He who came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not with the water only but with the water and with the blood"* (1 John 5. 6, R.V.).

For as he tells us in chapter 4. 9 and 10, the love of God in sending Christ to die was seen in that He was sent—

1. That we might live through Him (v. 8) and—
2. That He might be the propitiation for our sins (v. 10).

Not with *the Water of Life,* the Spirit given at Pentecost only, but with the *Blood of Propitiation* shed at Calvary. We need both Reconciliation and New Life.

THE SEVEN SCRIPTURES ON THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT.

Matthew 3. 11, and Luke 3. 16: "He shall baptize you with (ἐν=in) the Holy Ghost and with fire."

Mark 1. 8: "He shall baptize you with (no preposition in Greek) the Holy Ghost."

John 1 33: "The same is He which baptizeth with (ὁ βαπτιζων ἐν=He baptizing in) the Holy Ghost."

Acts 1. 5: "Ye shall be baptized with (ἐν=in) the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

Acts 11. 16: "Ye shall be baptized with (ἐν=in) the Holy Ghost."

1 Corinthians 12. 13: "For by (ἐν=in) One Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and were all made to drink into (ἐν=in) One Spirit."

CHAPTER X

The Baptism of the Spirit

IN the preceding chapter it was stated that the *Historical Event* was called the baptism of the Spirit; the *Experience* was the filling of the Holy Ghost.

Just as the Crucifixion at the Passover season was a great fact, an event in history never to be repeated, so the Baptism (or outpouring) of the Spirit at Pentecost was a stupendous fact in the Church's history, a once-for-all event (first on Jew; and then, in the house of Cornelius, on the Gentile), never to recur, but to be entered into by faith in each case.

The whole Church died with Christ at Calvary; the whole Church was baptised into the Body of Christ at Pentecost. When by faith the believer is joined unto the Lord he can say, "I have been crucified with Christ," "I died with Christ" so he can say, "I have been baptised into one Body" (1 Cor. 12. 13).

It does not need the Crucifixion to be repeated in order for each individual believer to say, "I have been crucified." It does not need the baptism of the Holy Spirit to be repeated for each saint to add, "I have been baptised into the One body."

There are only seven Scriptures in which reference is made to baptism "by," "with," or "in" (the preposition is the same in every case, however translated—ἐν=in) the Spirit.

In each of the four Gospels the words of John the Baptist are quoted of Christ. It was He Who was to baptise with the Holy Ghost, He Himself as we saw promising if He went away to send Him (the Holy Spirit) from the Father. This He did on the Day of Pentecost.

There remain two references in the Acts of the Apostles, and one only in the Epistles. Of those in the Acts, one (1. 5) refers to the scene at Pentecost, and the other (11. 16) to the scene in the house of Cornelius. In the first case Jesus is speaking, and bids them tarry at Jerusalem until they should be baptised in the Holy Ghost not many days hence, the historic event which is recorded in Acts 2. In the other case Peter is speaking, and tells how, as he began to speak in the house of Cornelius, "the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning," and he then quotes John the Baptist's words, "Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost" as being fulfilled on that occasion as at Pentecost, God giving the Gentiles "the like Gift" as He did then to the Jews. This led them to glorify God and exclaim, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life!" (v. 18).

These two historic occasions together are the baptism of the Spirit. In each case those present were filled with the Spirit and spoke with tongues.

The only other reference to the subject is 1 Cor. 12. 13 (R.V.): "*In one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit.*"

In this we see:

1. That every believer has been so baptised.

2. That it has reference specially to his being brought into the one body, and thus to the full supply from the Risen Head of every grace.

3. That it is a past event in every believer's life.

4. That there is no distinction between believers, Jewish or Gentile, bond or free, in this respect. It is true alike of all. This being so, we are not surprised to find that nowhere in Scripture are believers directed to seek for the baptism of the Spirit, nor do we read anywhere of two kinds of Christians —those who have and those who have not received that baptism.

On the other hand, we are bidden to be filled with the Spirit, and are warned that we may, notwithstanding our having died with Christ, and having been baptised into His body, walk carnally instead of spiritually, and are often exhorted to walk in the Spirit and not after the flesh. Of which more later.

Many have, however (notwithstanding the absence of any express direction in Scripture), been taught to seek for the baptism of the Spirit, and not a few greatly honoured servants of Christ have taught and urged this, and with much success, to the joy of many. It may be asked, If this is so, how is it, if it is unscriptural?

The reply is simple and obvious. It is *the language only* (the form of words) that is unscriptural.

Believers walking carnally or living on a low level of experience should be called upon and encouraged to seek in experience the filling of the Spirit, and many have done so and found their lives transformed and their weakness turned to strength, and the mourning into joy, and their barrenness into fruitfulness.

What then? Is it a great matter that they misname their experience? The experience, blessed be God, is theirs, and continues to their joy of faith and in blessing to others. Do they name it "Baptism" when they should call it "Enrichment" or "Fulness?" It is still the same—the Spirit's work in them. Our only reason for writing this chapter is to clear up a common misunderstanding in phraseology and to encourage the believer to "hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Tim. 1. 13). "Sound speech that cannot be condemned" (Titus 2. 8).

The baptism was given that we might be filled with the Spirit. Let us see to it that we daily and constantly are. This difficulty was felt by the leaders of Keswick, with the result reported by Dr. F. B. Meyer in *The Christian* in 1923, as follows:

"A conference was held some years ago by the leaders of the Keswick movement, which I well remember, to decide whether or not we should refer to the Pentecostal Gift as *a baptism*. After a careful consideration of the matter, it was finally decided that it would be wiser to confine that phrase to the outstanding events of Acts 2 and 10, while reserving "filled" and "anointed" for the experience of individual believers. There was no thought of binding any one, on the platform or off, to abandon the use of the phrase; but, on the whole, the position was taken that the Spirit had been given to the Church during the present dispensation, and given once for all; so that each member of the Body of Christ may claim his or her share in His gracious anointing. 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One.'"

PART II

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE WORLD

THE SPIRIT'S SWORD—THE WORD OF GOD.

"Take . . . the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6. 17).

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"The Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2. 13).

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"The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4. 12).

* * * * *

"The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life" (John 6. 63).

CHAPTER XI

The Spirit's Sword—The Word of God

THE work of the Spirit of God is first with those who are still dead in trespasses and sins, and as such form part of "the world" which lieth in the wicked one.

It is with these that the Spirit of God must of necessity begin if ever they are to be brought to God and saved. We shall see how He proceeds with this work.

But before inquiring as to that we must look at the instrument He employs for His purpose.

It is *the Word of God.* This is expressly declared to be the Sword (or weapon) of the Spirit. It is with this He convicts, teaches, and guides. It is His great medium. "Living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit (*i.e.*, things emotional and things spiritual, a very necessary work in these days of religious thrills and excitement) and of the joints and marrow (*i.e.*, the vertebrae or bones the outward, and the marrow the inner, the work of revealing what is mere external and what inner and vital), and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (*i.e.*, a revealer of secrets) (Heb. 4. 12).

Such then is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6. 17).

The Word of God was heard at first in the preached Gospel, and now, since "the Faith" has been once for all delivered to the saints, the Holy Scriptures, the Sacred Oracles are the Word of God.

When the Gospel is proclaimed, as Paul says: "Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost," then it proves by that same Spirit to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

The Thessalonians received it "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2. 13).

This "effectual working" of the Word of God is the wielding of the Sword by the Spirit. It is thus He begins His work with the world.

This is why the call to men has ever been, "Hear ye the Word of the Lord," and the sin of man, that thus God has called and no man regarded.

Some, however, do "hear," and it proves to the saving of the soul.

This then is the reason why the gift of the evangelist is given from the ascended Lord, the Spirit dividing this gift to those whom He will, that they may herald the Gospel to men. It has thus pleased God that by the foolishness of preaching men should be saved.

But while the Spirit's Sword is the Word of God, and He never speaks contrary to that Word, yet He is not limited, and uses what means He will in His sovereignty to reach the hearts of men.

"God is greater than man. . . . He giveth not

account of any of His matters, for God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not, in a dream in a vision of the night . . . that He may withdraw man from his purpose and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword" (Job 33. 14-18).

So the Spirit of God is not bound, nor the Word of God; but we have no authority to use any other Gospel than that revealed (Gal. 1. 9), and for us the sacred deposit of truth in the Scriptures is the armoury of the Spirit.

In all His gracious dealings with His saints He uses the Sword which He Himself forged, the Word of God.

Many fail to understand the work of the Spirit and to perceive His workings, and to hear His guiding voice, because they do not remember this, that He ever uses that mighty weapon which He Himself inspired—the Word of God that liveth and abideth for ever.

We shall see as we go on how He uses it in all His dealings with us.

When we think, then, of the work of the Spirit, let our thoughts turn at once to the Word of God, the Sword He uses.

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE WORLD

"When He (the Spirit) is come, He will reprove (convict, R.V.) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16. 8-11).

CHAPTER XII

How the Spirit Convicts

"WHEN He is come He will *convict.*" The word is translated "rebuke," "reprove," "convince," and (as a noun) "evidence" (Heb. 11. 1). The meaning is easy to discover. It means to bring conviction to the heart by rebuke, or reprove by such evidence as convinces. It is thus the Spirit does His work—He *convicts.*

What a difference exists between a truth held or admitted and even approved and one that has become a conviction! Some one put it thus: "There is a difference between your holding the truth and the truth holding you."

Conviction is light given. Truth so revealed by the Spirit that the man knows it. "Yea," Bunyan said, "I more than knew." It is truth that has got hold of a man, his conscience and his heart, so that he cannot shake it off, cannot escape it.

Scriptural illustrations are many. In John 8. 9 we read that the words of the Lord had such a power on those who had dragged the sinful woman into His presence for condemnation that they were "convicted" by their conscience and went out, unable to stand the light. The Lord had previously said that men avoided the light lest their deeds should be *"reproved"* (John 3. 20).

On the day of Pentecost, such was the power of the Word preached that the hearers were *pricked in their heart* (Acts 2. 37); and the murderers of Stephen, unable to resist the wisdom and Spirit by which he spake, *were cut to the heart* (Acts 7. 54).

Let me state a common case. A young man who has often heard the Gospel without "heeding" it, is spoken to by some faithful soul, and reminded that he is a sinner needing a Saviour. "O, yes," he replies, "I know we are all sinners," and goes his way as unaffected as before. But a few months after, the same faithful soul meets him and notes that he looks anxious and drawn, as if he had not slept for weeks. "What is the matter?" he inquires. "Oh," is the reply, "I am such a sinner! What shall I do to be saved? I dare not sleep from fear of waking up in Hell."

What has happened? The Spirit has convicted him of sin, of his lost estate. It is thus the Spirit works by conviction.

In the life of Stephen Grellet, the Friend, there is recorded the story of his conversion, thus:

"One evening, as I walked in the fields alone, my mind being under no kind of religious concern, nor in the least excited by the things I had heard or thought of, I was suddenly arrested by what seemed to be an awful voice proclaiming the words, Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! It reached my very soul; my whole man shook, it brought me like Saul to the ground. The great depravity and sinfulness of my heart were set open before me and the gulf of everlasting destruction to which I was verging. I was

made bitterly to cry out: 'If there is no God, doubtless there is a Hell.' I found myself in the midst of it. For a long time it seemed as if the thundering proclamation was yet heard. After that I remained almost whole days and nights exercised in prayer that the Lord would have mercy on me," etc.

It is thus the Spirit convicts.

The history of Augustine, Luther, and Bunyan and many another tells the same story. When he, the Spirit is come, He will convict.

These convictions never cease so long as the Spirit visits or remains in us. With His saints it is His usual way with them, never failing faithfully to reprove them of sin and witness to them of the salvation there is in Christ.

The operations of the Spirit become easy to understand if we remember His work is ever by conviction:

With the sinner, convincing him of his guilt, shame, and lost estate, and by the Gospel, of the power and willingness of Christ to save Him.

With His saints, convicting them whenever sin lies at the door, and opening to them the all-sufficiency of their Divine Lord and Saviour.

In this, as in all else, He uses the Word of God, the Message of the Gospel.

THE SPIRIT'S CONVICTION OF SIN.

"Of sin, because they believe not on Me" (John 16. 9).

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"Now when they heard this (Peter's sermon at Pentecost) they were pricked in their heart" (Acts 2. 37).

* * * * *

"When they heard these things (Stephen's speech) they were cut to the heart" (Acts 7. 53).

* * * * *

"It is hard for thee (Saul) to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9. 5).

CHAPTER XIII

The Spirit's Conviction of Sin

WE have seen that the Spirit works by conviction. The Lord enumerates three subjects upon which He convicts—Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment.

In each case He explains in what sense He convicts of these, and it is for us now to consider them. It will be remembered that the subject of this conviction is still "the world," the unregenerate man.

It is with a view to his salvation; and as yet the Spirit, not having been received, has not taken up His abode in the one with whom He is thus "striving." We are therefore describing the work of the Spirit in bringing man to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, in order that he may be saved—the work of the Spirit in bringing the sinner to God.

There are three subjects of which the world is totally ignorant and deceived. They are:

1. The true nature of sin.
2. The manner of righteousness.
3. The character of judgment.

No man, apart from the Spirit's teaching, perceives, or, when heard, believes the truth as to these. It is folly to him.

It is the work of the Spirit to convince and con-

vict the world upon these things. We are concerned in this chapter with the first of the three—*Sin.*

What does the world regard as sin?

The man of the world would define it as moral transgression, disobedience to a known commandment, doing wrong.

How startling then the Lord's definition: "Because they believe not on Me"!

Sin is not merely an act or series of false steps; it is an attitude; an attitude of defiance, of rebellion against the Most High God. And since in these last days He has manifested Himself and spoken to us in His Son, the rejection of Christ, the refusal to hear, believe or receive Him is the height of sin—sin which culminated in His murder, when with wicked hands men slew Him and hanged Him on a tree. Such is sin, and it is the work of the Spirit of God to reveal this fact to man's heart and convict him of its truth.

A man of the world once expressed what many such feel: "I don't see why God should be so hard on my few little peccadillos." The reply should be: He is not. He is gracious and full of compassion. He delights in mercy and would willingly forgive, but your whole life is *one long defiance of His authority,* His love, His power, the whole order of His rule. You have not believed on Him or on Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.

How different the attitude of the man convicted by the Spirit of the true nature of sin, its exceeding sinfulness, its inexcusable guilt, its utter ruin, filth and shame! Then he abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes.

A young man, converted at D. L. Moody's meetings, went home to confess Christ to his father, and in doing so entreated him to come as a sinner to Christ. The father was surprised and annoyed at being ranked as a sinner. Had he not been a good father, was he not upright, and had he not done the best he could?

Some time passed, when one night the son, who was sleeping with his father, awoke and became aware of his father sitting up in the darkness in the attitude of prayer, and overheard him saying in the agony of his mind: "O God, I'm such a sinner, such a sinner!"

But the Spirit does not leave the convicted sinner thus to mourn his guilt, but produces in him *"a broken and a contrite heart,"* which is true repentance.

"The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Psa. 34. 18). "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5. 4).

As the Spirit brings to mind these precious truths, the sinner no longer despairs, but longs for mercy, desires true righteousness, but knows not wherein righteousness consists. It is this the Spirit goes on to teach.

THE SPIRIT CONVICTING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more" (John 16. 10).

* * * * *

"But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, . . . even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe" (Rom. 3. 21, 22, R.V.).

* * * * *

"Jehovah-Tsidkenu—The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. 23. 6).

CHAPTER XIV

The Spirit Convicting of Righteousness

WE have said that the man of the world is totally ignorant of the way or nature of righteousness; that he would not believe it, were it told to him. The suggestion of such a righteousness as is "manifested" (Rom. 3. 21) in the Gospel, is foolishness to him.

The man of the world will tell you that righteousness consists in doing right, and he is fairly persuaded of his good intentions in that direction. He has his own standards of what is right, has no reason to doubt they are sufficient and good, and in a general way he walks in the light of the fire that he has thus kindled, thinking all is well, believing that doing the few things he approves as righteousness (while in all others he does his own will) is the same thing as loving righteousness and being righteous. He thus justifies himself, remaining blind to the truth.

In this he is greatly encouraged by his philosophers, and specially the poets. Such dicta as: "His creed is right whose life is in the right," greatly please him. He has generally no positive creed; indeed, rather despises "dogmas," and is satisfied that his life, being right in his own eyes, all is well.

It will readily be seen that when the Spirit of God

convicts the world of sin, revealing to this self-deceived man the falsity of his position, the guilt of his heart, the exceeding sinfulness of his attitude towards God and His Christ, that such a refuge of lies falls to pieces. He realises that he stands naked before God, exposed to His righteous judgment and indignation. Where then is righteousness to be found? How can he, God-condemned and self-judged, ever hope to stand before the Holiness of God!

Righteousness is a right attitude toward God, as sin is a false one. Righteousness is rightness of relationship. It is being "right with God." It is a standing before God that cannot be challenged. It is being justified in His sight. It is a condition precedent to all right conduct. Man must be right before he can do right.

Now the Spirit expressly witnesses in many Scriptures that this righteousness:

1. *Is not from man.* He cannot make himself right or justify himself in God's sight.

2. *Is not by the works of the law.* It is not and cannot be acquired, attained to, or wrought out by law-keeping. The commandment only serves to increase the knowledge of sin and deepen the sense of guilt (Rom. 3. 20; 7. 9-13).

How does the Spirit convict of righteousness? Hear the words of the Lord: *"Of righteousness, because I go to the Father and ye see Me no more."*

Let us recall some outstanding facts as to righteousness taught elsewhere in Scripture that we may discover the Lord's meaning.

1. *Righteousness is a gift from God* (Rom. 5. 17).

Manifested by Him to man in the Gospel, but quite apart from law-keeping (Rom. 3. 21).

2. *It is in Christ, who wrought it out for man by His sacrifice on Calvary.* Thus Christ Himself is "Our Righteousness"—Jehovah Tsidkenu, "The Lord our Righteousness." So that the believer can say: "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength"

3. *It is "upon all them that believe"* (Rom. 3. 22); that is to say, when the sinner flees to Christ for refuge he receives the gift of righteousness. It is imputed to him, and from that time God sees him righteous in Christ and deals with him as such. His sins being put away from him on the ground of the finished work of Christ, he is justified.

4. This righteousness or standing having been given him, *the Spirit now begins to work in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness,* and teaches him to live righteously, so that being "righteous" he acts righteously.

Now it is clear from all this that until Christ had finished His atoning work on earth there could be no righteousness for guilty man.

But since "He has gone to the Father and we see Him no more," we know that Our Righteousness is in Heaven.

But what a jargon of dogmas and theology all this appears to the unawakened and unregenerate man of the world. This, "the wisdom of God," is foolishness to him. It offends him.

Let us, however, think again of the man who has been convicted of sin, who abhors himself, and sees no hope of righteousness either in himself or his law-keeping. Let us tell him there is "a righteousness

from God" revealed in the Gospel and at once he begins to listen. We recount to his awakened ears the story of Redeeming Love, how that Christ died for the ungodly. He is now all attention, for that word "ungodly" speaks to his case. We assure him from God's Word that the righteousness in Christ is a free gift for all who believe. Amazed at both the simplicity and grandeur of it, he cries, "Lord, I believe," and the Spirit witnesses to him that he too, sinner as he is, is "accepted in the Beloved," "justified freely through the redemption" that is in Christ.

These things God doeth, not once nor twice; they are His constant work in the Gospel. By these things men live.

Just as a receipt upon the file is a comfort and assurance to the debtor, so the fact that Christ has returned to the Father and we see Him no more is a full assurance that our sins have been once for all put away by His Blood and that He, our Righteousness, is in Heaven, the receipt for all our sins.

Happy indeed then is the man to whom the Spirit witnesses that he is righteous. David, we read, describes this righteousness in Psalm 32. 1, 2, *"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."*

Perhaps I may be permitted to repeat the points given in my "Great Chapters in the Bible." No. 1, where, speaking of this righteousness of which the Spirit convicts, I state them thus (Rom. 3. 21-28):

1. Apart from law (v. 21).
2. Attested by law and prophets (v. 21).

3. Atonement the basis, "through the redemption in Christ Jesus."

4. Addressed to all (vv. 22 and 26).

5. Accepted by faith (vv. 22 and 25).

6. Affecting both past and present dispensations (vv. 23-26).

7. All boasting excluded (v. 27).

The conclusion being that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law (v. 28).

THE SPIRIT CONVICTING OF JUDGMENT.

"Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged" (John 16. 11).

* * * * *

"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven" (Luke 10. 18).

* * * * *

"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the Evil One" (1 John 5. 19, R.V.).

* * * * *

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17. 16).

CHAPTER XV

The Spirit Convicting of Judgment

"THE Prince of this World," such is the proud title that the Lord Jesus thrice called Satan by.

As Prince, he is the leader of its fashion, the director of its thoughts, the inspirer of its politics, the provoker of its wars, the organizer of its systems, and the conceiver and promoter of its religions.

The world, though suffering untold misery under his rule is nevertheless proud, even boastful of all these things. "The world is getting better," they assert, and progressing to a Millennium of happiness. They point to its remarkable attainments, its inventions, spread of knowledge, and culture.

And the Lord Jesus tells us: *"The Prince of this World is judged."* But the Prince of Darkness has disguised himself as an "angel of light," and men do not know or recognise who it is that is at the helm of its so-called progress, for the "god of this world" hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not.

How little this world suspects that its prince and leader, its systems and fashions, are all under the judgment of God. "The Prince of this World is judged."

The threefold definition of *"all that is in the world"*

in 1 John 2. 16, reveals what this world is aiming at, what it pursues so eagerly.

"The lust of the flesh,
The lust of the eyes,
The vain glory of life."

Men strive, work, fight for these, and the Apostle tells us that "they are not of the Father, but of the world." And Jesus says: "The Prince of this World is judged." Judgment has been passed on it all. It is under condemnation, awaiting the execution of the righteous sentence.

It is the work of the Spirit to convict men of the truth of this great fact. To reveal it to them from the Word of God, to convince them of the truth of it in their hearts.

When He has done this gracious work, the instructed and enlightened soul sees his danger and "flees from the wrath to come."

Realising that "Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. 1. 4), he confesses he can no longer remain in it, but is a stranger and a pilgrim. He finds himself in a scene under judgment, a stranger and a pilgrim by association with Christ. This the Spirit has taught him.

So having been convicted of sin, he knows his ruin, being convicted of righteousness he knows his acceptance in Christ, and being convicted of judgment he recognises that while he is in the world he is not of it. He comes out from it that he may not perish in its overthrow, and becomes a stranger and pilgrim on the earth.

In other words, the Spirit has done His gracious work, he has become a believer, a Christian. This is the work of the Spirit in the world (Acts 15. 14). It is thus that men become true children of God.

Things that the world can by its wisdom never discover, and if heard will not and cannot believe (1 Cor. 2. 14), for they are "foolishness" to the carnal mind, these God reveals to and convicts the awakened sinner of, and he believing and receiving them passes from death unto life as he embraces them for his own salvation.

So the work of the Spirit in the world is to call men out of the world, and thus purify unto God a people for His own possession.

HOW AND WHEN THE SPIRIT IS RECEIVED

"O foolish Galatians . . . This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

"Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. 3. 1-7).

CHAPTER XVI

How and When the Spirit is Received

THE Galatian Christians were in danger of going back to law-keeping as a principle of life and the Apostle finds it necessary to remind them of their conversion.

How did it take place? Very simply but clearly the Apostle describes it thus (Gal. 3. 1-4).

1. Jesus Christ had been openly preached to them as the One who had been crucified, and died for them (v. 1).

2. They had abandoned all hope of salvation by their own efforts, that is, by works of law, or law-keeping.

3. They had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ with the hearing of faith.

4. The Spirit had thereupon been received by them.

5. They had then suffered many things for their faith.

This is the true story of every genuine conversion to God.

The important feature in it was, of course, the fact *that they had received the Spirit.* For a true Christian is one who has received the Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8. 14).

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His" (Rom. 8. 9).

"The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8. 16).

"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son unto your hearts" (Gal. 4. 6).

"Hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John 3. 24).

"Hereby know we that we abide in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4. 13).

These, and many more Scriptures, assure us that a Christian is distinguished by this one fact, that the Spirit of God has been given to him, and that no one is a true child of God of whom this is not true. The Apostle therefore is urgent.

This only would I learn of you? How did you receive the Spirit? Was it by works of law? Did you so strive to keep the commandments that at length you received as a reward the gracious Spirit of promise? No, a thousand times, no!

> "Not the labour of my hands,
> Can fulfil Thy law's demands."

How then? Mark well the answer! The Holy Spirit was received "BY THE HEARING OF FAITH."

This statement is borne out by the experience of the first Gentiles, who received the Spirit. The scene is in the house of Cornelius. Peter is preaching the Gospel.

"*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word*" (Acts 10. 44). They received the Spirit "by the hearing of faith."

The expression is repeated in the fifth verse (Gal. 3. 5). *"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit* (that is, by preaching Christ crucified, and the promises of the Gospel, remission and the gift of the Spirit) *and worketh miracles among you* (the miracle of conversion) *doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?"*

The illustration in the next verse confirms it.

"Even as Abraham believed God (*i.e.*, the hearing of faith) *and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

The deduction in the next verse shows that this is the usual, indeed, the only, way of receiving the Spirit, for what was true of Abraham is true of all believers.

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith (*i.e.*, hear with the hearing of faith) *the same are the children of Abraham."*

This "hearing of faith" is not merely a casual hearing, even with assent, but "hearing" that is a *"heeding."* A hearing that carries with it the submission of the heart as well as the accrediting of God. A faith that is described in the first and last chapters of the great Epistle of Faith (Rom. 1. 5 and 16. 26), as "the obedience of faith." And to this agrees the expression we have in Acts 5. 32: *"The Holy Spirit that God hath given to them that obey Him."*

It is the same in John 5. 24: *"He that heareth My Word* (not a wayside hearing, but a "heeding," a responding with the "obedience of faith") *hath everlasting life."* And the word becomes true that says: *"Hear and your soul shall live"* (Isa. 55. 3).

The answer to the question: How and when is the

Spirit received? is: When the sinner believes with the hearing of faith—that is, at conversion.

When the sinner receives Christ he receives the Spirit. And as he receives Christ by the simple and sincere response of faith, so he receives the Spirit.

PART III

THE INITIAL WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER

THE BODY, THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST

"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? . . . He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit. . . . What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6. 15-20).

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"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4. 10, 11).

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"So now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death" (Phil. 1. 20).

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"I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5. 23).

CHAPTER XVII

The Body the Temple of the Holy Ghost

WE have seen the work of the Holy Spirit in the world, its aim and object being the bringing of the sinner to Christ that he may be saved.

For this purpose the Gospel preached in the power of the Spirit, or as it is said by the first preacher himself, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven" (1 Peter 1. 12), is used to awaken and call the sinner to repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Spirit using the Word preached, to convict of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, as we have seen.

The sinner being thus convinced, receives the Lord Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and as he does so receives from Him the gift of the Holy Spirit. So by the hearing of faith the Spirit is received.

We have now to consider what takes place when the Spirit is thus received—when he enters and takes up His residence in the man.

We are told that He enters the body and that it thereupon becomes *a Temple of the Holy Ghost.* We need not be surprised at this, nor regard it as too material or literal to be true.

Little as we know of spirits, we do learn from the Gospels that evil spirits possessed men, entering their bodies and driving them to self-destruction (Matt. 5. 5 and 9. 22). There was a special manifestation of this demon-possession in the Lord's day, the spirits recognising Him and crying out at His presence (Mark 1. 24), entreating to be allowed to go into the bodies of swine rather than be disembodied (Matt. 8. 31).

Satan, we read, entered into Judas, and used his body as the instrument of evil, and in it he did his deadly work.

So also the Holy Spirit comes to indwell the body of the believer, that he may use every part of that body for His service and glory.

Not that the Holy Spirit acts directly on the limbs or physical parts, but since those "instruments" are operated by the will, so the Spirit uses the nobler parts of the human organisation, and thus obtains the service of the physical. The springs of action are under His sway and control.

There is, however, no violence or compulsion done to any part, all is by the sweet persuasion, the constraining love of Christ, and the holy convictions and calls to which a willing response is given.

Thus while it is the Spirit's power, the man is conscious that it is his will that acts freely and gladly.

Let us see what these nobler directing powers of the body are, and how the Spirit plays His music upon and uses them.

1. THE CONSCIENCE is generally first reached. The witness of the Word by the Spirit awakening and alarming it into action as we have seen (John 16. 8-11).

2. THE MEMORY is specially mentioned as coming under the power of the Spirit. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14. 26).

We all can recall cases of conversion brought about by the Spirit bringing to memory a mother's prayers, a father's counsels, a hymn learned in childhood, a text heard years before, or a sermon long forgotten.

3. THE DESIRES are also affected. "The Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us (that is, of course, "in us") with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8. 26). Those "inexpressible longings" are familiar to all saints. Often they amount almost to physical pain. As David said: "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."

4. THE WILL, that man at the helm of the whole system of manhood. "Mr. Will be Will," as Bunyan names it, is powerfully and directly wrought upon. "It is God that worketh in you both *to will* (to purpose and determine) and to do of His good pleasure."

5. THE TEMPER. In Scripture never so called, but referred to as *"the spirit of the mind."* This is renewed (Eph. 4. 23), so that its hastiness is checked and a graciousness prevails; the mind once disturbed by tempests of passion is now like the Sea of Galilee. After the Lord had said, "Peace, be still," a great calm prevailed; so the spirit is subdued and renewed.

6. THE MIND. This is expressly said to be the sphere of the Spirit's work. In the New Covenant it is written: "I will put My laws into their mind" (Heb. 8. 10). And this writing is not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God (2 Cor.

3. 3). This means that a Divine enlightenment of the understanding takes place.

7. THE HEART, the seat of the affections, is also affected. On these "fleshy tables of the heart" the Spirit writes the law of God. "In their hearts will I write them." So that the mind understands and the heart loves the law of God.

It is thus that the Spirit resides and operates in the body so that it becomes His temple.

The result is very soon seen in

8. THE MEMBERS, no longer being "servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, but becoming servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. 6. 19).

They are first of all *presented* to God. "I beseech you therefore by the merits of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Rom. 12. 1).

They are then *devoted* to Him as being themselves members of Christ. "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?" (1 Cor. 6. 15).

In closing this chapter let me emphasise one matter upon which there is much misunderstanding. The work of the Spirit, while, as we have seen, it affects the heart, is not to be regarded as an emotional effect. However pleasant emotions may be, they are not important, and may be dangerous. They attend on but are not of the essence of the Spirit's work in us.

One has wisely said "Emotional experiences generally let you down badly."

A spiritual man is controlled and directed by the

renewed will. He keeps both his spirit and his feelings under the control of his will (1 Cor. 14. 32).

Any loss of self-control is disastrous. Feelings are not yielded to but governed by the will. Those that are weak, sentimental, foolish, or even hysterical are sternly denied and wisely controlled. There is no such thing recognised in the Christian faith as holds among the heathen—the dervish who works himself up into delirium or falls into an emotional trance. No, ever and always, *the fruit of the Spirit is self-control,* and any exhibition that entails the loss of that sober control is not of God. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Let the prophets of Baal leap on their altars and cut themselves with knives, but by the grace of God we will "live soberly" and "speak forth the words of soberness and truth."

Let the believer then live and act in the sanctified will and not in the emotions.

THE FIRST WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER—REGENERATION

"Ye must be born again" (John 3. 7).

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"Born of the Spirit" (John 3. 5, 6, and 8).

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"Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God" (2 Cor. 5. 17, 18).

* * * * *

"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6. 15).

* * * * *

"Ye have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3. 9, 10).

* * * * *

"Put on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4. 24).

CHAPTER XVIII

The First Work—Regeneration

WHEN the Spirit is received His first work is to give life: the dead hearing (by the Spirit), the voice of the Son of God. "Those that hear shall live" (John 5. 25).

The two agencies in the New Birth are the Spirit of God and the Word of God (the Spirit's Sword).

The Spirit, using the Word, illuminates, awakens, convicts, leads to repentance and faith in Christ, who gives the Holy Spirit to the believer, so that he is born again.

Thus Peter says: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God" (1. 23). And James: "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth."

And Paul told the Corinthians that he had "in Christ Jesus begotten them through the Gospel," though he thanks God he baptised none of them (1. 14), lest they should attribute any virtue either to him or to any ceremony. The new birth is quite apart from baptism, which is never in Scripture said to be the means or medium of regeneration.

The first operation of the Holy Spirit, then, is to bring about A NEW CREATION.

Not a reformation, not an emotional experience, but an act of creation. Not the changing or improving of what already exists, but the calling into being of

that which did not exist before. What was not before, now is. It is a new thing. Something is begotten and brought forth. It is called THE NEW MAN.

"There is not only a *moral*, but a *physical* immediate operation of the Spirit" (Owen). Similar in its nature to that mighty power that "wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead" (Eph. 1. 20).

As at the first creation things seen were not made of things appearing (Heb. 11. 3), so in the new creation; there was not, then at the Word of the Lord, there was: He spake, and it was done. The new man came into being.

The old man, that born of the flesh, is not done away, he still lives, but is to be put off with his deeds; and the new man "created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4. 24) is to be put on, that is, adopted as the rule of life and conduct.

This new man is "after the image of Him that created him," so that putting on the new man is putting on Christ, and this at new birth the believer is said to have done (Col. 3. 9; Gal. 3. 27).

Therefore, the work of the Spirit is not to improve the natural, but to begin an entirely new thing. Calling into being a new creation, the "new man," He teaches the believer to put off the old and to put on the new.

Nothing avails with God but this new creation. His own work, undefilable, it glorifies Him and brings satisfaction to Him.

If any man be "in Christ" he is a new creation, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. All is of God.

A consideration of the Scriptures on this subject will help us.

1. *First,* what is said of *the old man* (all that we are by association with the first Adam)?

i. *He was crucified.* "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him" (Rom. 6. 6).

ii. *We have put off the old man.* "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3. 9).

iii. *Let us then put him off.* "Put off concerning the former life the old man, which is corrupt" (Eph. 4. 22).

2. *Then what is said of the new man* (the new creation in Christ Jesus).

i. *We are a new creation.* "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5. 1, 7, R.V.).

ii. *We have put on the new man.* "Ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3. 10).

iii. *Let us therefore put him on.* "That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4. 24).

BAPTISED BY THE SPIRIT INTO ONE BODY.

"For by one Spirit are (R.V., were) we all baptised into one body" (1 Cor. 12. 13).

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"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling" (Eph. 4. 4).

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"God gave Him (Christ) to be Head over all things to the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1. 22, 23).

* * * * *

"Holding the Head" (Col. 2. 19).

CHAPTER XIX

Baptised by the Spirit into One Body

WE are considering in this part of our treatise the initial work of the Spirit in the believer. By that is intended His immediate and once-for-all work as distinct from His continuous operations.

These things of which we speak are effected completely. The work is done and stands eternally, once for all accomplished. It is neither repeated, nor need be.

They may be said to be the *past tenses in the believer's life.* The new man "hath been created," the new life is a present possession—"Hath everlasting life," for "God hath given us eternal life." So we shall see with all those things of which we treat in this part, they are our "jewels" as distinct from the "spending money" we may carry with us, as Bunyan aptly calls them. They cannot be taken from us. They are our eternal inheritance in Christ.

We have already spoken of the nature of the baptism of the Spirit; it remains to say something of His work in bringing us into the One Body.

The Scripture we must look at then is 1 Corinthians 12. 12-14:

"For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body

so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, and have all been made to drink of One Spirit, for the body is not one member but many."

The One Body is the Church, Christ, and His members (designated Christ in v. 12). He is the Head of the Body (Eph. 1. 22). "The Church, which is His body," being the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Every one then who is born from above by the operation of the Spirit as we saw in the last chapter, is also *"baptised into the one body,"* that is, brought by the effectual working of the same Spirit into a living, organic union with Christ, so that he becomes a member of Christ, "joined to the Lord," "one Spirit," part of the body, having his place in its organism, and a work to do as a member of the body.

There is but one body. Men have built great organisations which they have called churches, and have spoken as if, were all these organisations united, there would then be one visible church on earth. But the Church which is His body *is not a visible body.* Its Head is in Heaven, and we see Him no more. The organisations men call churches may at best contain a few members of the one Body, and, alas! a great number of those who don't belong to Christ, never having been born again of the Spirit or by that Spirit baptised into the Body. With these man-made institutions we are not now concerned. Our matter is this, that if we have indeed received the Spirit by "the hearing of faith" we have been thereby made members of Christ and have entered by the only Door

into the Church. Not the mixed multitude that constitutes Christendom, but the elect of God, members of that mystic and invisible Body, "The Church of the Firstborn in Heaven," joined to our Unseen Head, the Lord in Heaven, by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

It is our responsibility to "hold the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2. 19).

It is our joy to meet with other members of the same One Body in the "gatherings of the saints," and to maintain "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" looking lest the "middle walls of partition" erected by men contained in ordinances, creeds, and sectarian names, separate us from the true fellowship of saints, that is with all who are members of the One Body into which by the Spirit we have all been baptised.

THE SEALING OF THE SPIRIT

"Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us, is God. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1. 21, 22).

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"In whom (Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also having believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His Glory" (Eph. 1. 13, 14).

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"Grieve not the Holy Spirit, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4. 30, R.V.).

CHAPTER XX

The Sealing of the Spirit

IN the three passages on the previous page we have in each case a past tense, a completed past, as of a thing once and for ever done.

"Who hath sealed" (1 Cor. 1. 22), "Ye were sealed" (Eph. 1. 13), "Ye were sealed" (Eph. 4. 30). This sealing is therefore one of the initial works of the Spirit in the believer.

We shall be perhaps more correct in saying that God sealed us, and that the sealing was the giving of the Spirit, so that that Spirit is the seal, that wherewith we have been sealed of God.

There are several ideas inherent in the figure of a seal.

1. SECRECY. Men sealed that which they wished kept secret, or undisclosed, as the prophet was told to seal up the sayings of the prophecy.

So the Lord has sealed with an unseen seal His own people. No one can say who they are (except they discover themselves by departing from iniquity), but they have this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His."

2. POSSESSION. The seal denotes ownership.

"Then on each He setteth,
His own secret sign,
They that have My Spirit,
These, saith He, are Mine."

The gift of the Spirit is an indication to us, a blessed assurance that we are His for ever. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His, but conversely, He who has the Spirit knows thereby he is Christ's.

3. SECURITY. A seal was impressed for safety, as appears in the sealing of the stone over the grave of Christ. "Make it as sure as ye can." So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch (Matt. 27. 6).

4. For the seal was a mark of AUTHORITY, that, though fragile in itself, yet no man dared to break. The king's seal had behind it the dignity and power of the royal authority. And God sealed us when we came to Christ, and the seal was the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Thus the sealing is the evidence of our being part of the purchased possession.

When Jeremiah was bidden to purchase a possession of Hanameel, his uncle's son, he subscribed the evidence of the purchase and sealed it (Jer. 32. 10), and giving it to Baruch, charged him: "Thus said the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase both which is sealed and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel that they may continue many days."

Had the Apostle this incident in mind when he reminded us that we had "this treasure in earthen vessels?" (2 Cor. 4. 7). A *sealed* evidence we have in our earthen vessel (this body of humiliation), the Holy Spirit of promise, and an *open* evidence the grace and gifts of that same Spirit, in an earthen vessel

that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

Some have delighted to press the figure of a seal further and to point out that it makes an impress on which may be seen the image of the sealed; but true as that may be of the work of the Spirit in His continuing ministry, yet it is not His work, but Himself, who is the seal.

Am I sure that God has given me His Spirit, then I am assured that I have been sealed as part of the purchased possession until the day of its final redemption.

THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT.

"Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God, Who hath also sealed us and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1. 21, 22).

* * * * *

"In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation. In Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1. 13, 14).

CHAPTER XXI

The Earnest of the Spirit

THERE are but two Scriptures that speak of the Earnest of the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 1. 22 tells us, "God hath given us the earnest of the Spirit," and Ephesians 1. 13, 14, that it is the earnest of our inheritance until the day of redemption.

From these we learn that the Spirit Himself is the earnest, just as He is the seal. Not that He gives the earnest, but He is Himself the earnest that God has given us in our hearts.

What then is an Earnest?

1. It is *a pledge of future performance.* The *seal* is a pledge that we are Christ's. The Spirit, who is the seal, will see that this is disputed by no one. He is with us that He may witness to us of the fact and secure and hold us for Christ The *earnest,* on the other hand, is a pledge on behalf of God that all He has promised us He will fulfil. The Spirit is with us to assure us of the fact, and to see that it is accomplished. He Himself is the pledge of the future performance to us of all the promises of God, of the future realisation of all the fulness there is for us in Christ. Not one of these will fail. Have we not in Him the earnest?

2 *It is a token,* a favour assuring us of unchanging

love, of definite purpose. As the white stone bearing the secret new name was a token to the overcomers of the church at Pergamos, or to choose an illustration from modern life, as the engagement ring is to the lover, so the Lover of our souls has given us a token, and just as the beloved regards her ring as a pledge of an engagement until the bridal day, so our hearts rejoice in an engagement by One who never could or would break it, of which we have received the pledge and token in the gift of the Spirit.

There is a beautiful use of the same thought in Jeremiah 30. 21. There Jehovah is speaking in grace to His rebellious people. He has spoken of judgment and captivity, but He cannot forget them, or give them up. So in sovereign grace He will Himself send a Governor, One who shall proceed from the midst of them and "I will cause Him to draw near, and He shall approach unto me for who is this that *hath engaged Himself* to approach unto Me? saith the Lord. And ye shall be My people and I will be your God" (Jer. 30. 21, 22).

So the Holy One of Israel "engaged Himself" on behalf of His people. The same promise is recorded in the New Covenant: "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people," that covenant ratified in the Blood of Christ, who has thus engaged Himself for us and of that engagement has given us the pledge and token in the gift of the Spirit.

3. It entails *a solemn responsibility* on our part. The pledge and token given us of God when He sent His Spirit to indwell our bodies puts upon us an obligation of the most serious nature—*to recognise*

the fact, so that it may have due weight with us, so that we may never forget Whose we are. *To behave becomingly,* just as a princess betrothed to a great king would recognise the dignity of the alliance and seek to comport herself in all things worthily of her high calling, and *to prepare for the great event* coming. Seeing we look for such great things, what manner of persons should we be?

It is said of the Bride in Revelation 19. 7, that she "hath made herself ready," as every true bride prepares for the day when the pledge will be realised and the union so long anticipated take place.

THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT.

"We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8. 22, 23).

CHAPTER XXII

The Firstfruits of the Spirit

THIS expression occurs but once in the Scriptures, in Romans 8. 23. "Ourselves also which have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies."

The thought is very similar to that of the earnest, but with this difference. The earnest is the pledge of performance, the token of engagement, but the firstfruits is part of promised possession. It is something in advance of that which is coming.

As the Spirit is the seal and the earnest, so He is Himself the Firstfruits. He with all His comfort and grace is part now of our inheritance in Christ.

He reveals and brings us into the enjoyment of much that is "in Christ" for us, and is thus not only Himself the Firstfruits, but effects in us in advance a foretaste of glories to come.

The context is important and instructive. The believer is described as groaning within himself.

The reason of this groaning is this, that his body is not yet redeemed, he longs for that event, "the adoption" as it is termed; for till then he finds himself with a body in which is the law of sin and death,

often causing him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this dead body?"

His position is described accurately in verse 10: "If Christ is in you (a real Christian) the body is dead (that is, has in it the law or principle of sin and death), because of sin, but the Spirit (having been quickened from the dead) is life because of righteousness." He finds himself a quickened spirit in a dead body.

But he has a blessed hope in the Firstfruits of the Spirit. He has received from God that Holy Spirit of Promise. It is the same Spirit by which God raised up Christ from the dead. He will, when the day of adoption comes, quicken his dying body!

The fact of the Spirit's presence in his body is not only a pledge and token, but is a firstfruits, the rest will follow as of certain, as of course.

For some wise reason that day is not yet, and the whole creation "travaileth in pain." It has been subjected to vanity but will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Have you received the Spirit? Then hope on to the end. He is the Firstfruits, the groaning will soon cease, the day of adoption draws near, and then the Spirit which is already in them, will quicken our mortal bodies and they will share in the redemption of which we are even now enjoying by the Spirit so full a measure.

PART IV

THE EQUIPMENT BY THE SPIRIT FOR LIFE AND SERVICE

THE ANOINTING OF THE SPIRIT.

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good" (Acts 10. 38).

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"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor" (Luke 4. 18.)

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"Thy Holy Servant Jesus whom Thou hast anointed" (Acts 4. 27, R.V.).

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"Now He which . . . hath anointed us is God" (2 Cor. 1. 21).

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"Ye have an unction (anointing) from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John 2. 20).

Chapter XXIII

The Anointing of the Spirit

It is God who anoints, and the anointing is the Holy Spirit. Just as He is Himself the seal, the earnest, and the firstfruits.

So we must not speak of being anointed by the Spirit, but anointed by God with the Spirit.

"The anointing which ye have received " is the Holy Spirit, and that same Anointing teaches us and in Him we must abide.

So as surely as the Holy Spirit is the seal, and having received Him, we are assured that we are the eternal possession of Christ.

And also as surely as He is the earnest and first-fruits, so that having received Him we have a pledge and token, a solemn engagement that all God has promised will be ours.

So surely, too, is He the Anointing, so that we know that we have been set apart for God, as truly and more effectually than Aaron was by the sacred anointing oil. He, the Spirit, is the out-poured, "Holy Anointing Oil" that has consecrated and ordained us to life and service for God (Exodus 30. 25-31).

This anointing then took place when we received the Spirit.

The ceremony of anointing under the Law is described in Exodus 29. 7: "Then shall thou take the anointing oil and pour it upon his (Aaron's) head and anoint him;" and in Leviticus 8. 12: "And Moses poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head and anointed him to sanctify him" (v. 30). "And Moses took of the anointing oil and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon his sons and upon his sons' garments, and sanctified Aaron and his garments and his sons and his sons' garments with him."

From this we learn that the anointing was "to sanctify him," and we having been sanctified by the sprinkled blood (Heb. 10. 10; 13. 12), are sanctified by the Spirit, "the holy anointing oil."

So the Spirit is to us the Evidence and token of our being sanctified and set apart to our God for ever.

There were three classes of persons anointed in Old Testament times.

1. THE KING, who is so often referred to as "The Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. 24. 10).

2. THE PROPHET (1 Kings 19. 16), and

3. THE PRIEST, as we have seen above.

In all these cases the anointing was their sanctification to the position and work to which God had called them, and their initiation into that service.

So it was with the Lord Jesus, our Great Prophet, Priest, and King. John the Baptist saw the Spirit descend from Heaven as a dove and it abode upon Him, while the Father bore witness from Heaven: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3. 16, 17). So God anointed Jesus of Nazareth

with the Holy Ghost (Acts 10. 38). "And He which hath anointed *us* is God" (2 Cor. 1. 21). This being so, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness?

Of the Spirit's work as the "unction" in teaching we treat in the next chapter.

THE UNCTION (THE SPIRIT) FROM THE HOLY ONE (CHRIST).

"Little children, it is the last time, and . . . now are there many Antichrists. . . . But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John 2. 18-20).

* * * * *

"The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1 John 2. 27).

CHAPTER XXIV

Wisdom from Above

THE UNCTION FROM THE HOLY ONE

GOD having sanctified and set apart the believer by the gift of the Spirit, the Spirit becomes his equipment for life and service. He supplies to him from the risen Lord all he needs to live to the glory of God.

This equipment of the Spirit consists principally in four things of which we shall treat in separate chapters.

1. WISDOM FROM ABOVE. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things" (1 John 2. 20).

2. POWER FROM ON HIGH. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is upon you" (Acts 1. 8).

3. LOVE. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5. 5), and

4. LIBERTY. "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3. 17).

Wisdom, power, love, liberty! What a glorious equipment. These are *the effectives in our lives*, and when the Spirit was given to us these became ours. Let us consider in what sense. In this chapter we think of the first WISDOM FROM ABOVE.

One of the sorrows that has come upon man by sin is ignorance, darkness, blindness. So that it is written: "There is none that understandeth," "Their foolish heart was darkened," "The God of this world hath blinded their eyes." Even their boasted science

and wisdom is "foolishness with God," because leaving out the greatest factor of all—God—it is based upon a false foundation. Not liking to retain God in their knowledge, they are ever learning but "never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." But when the Spirit of God is received all is changed.

"Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things" (1 John 2. 20).

What a surprising statement! And the more so because it is written to the little children in Christ. It is the fulfilment of the promise: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," and, "All shall know Thee from the least unto the greatest." In what sense then is this true?

Not, of course, that every believer knows all the facts of life and being. This is of course not so. One small human head could never hold them. Many remain as to actual facts in gross ignorance, but in the following manner.

1. IN ILLUMINATION. All believers receiving the Spirit are lit up. As though a child has been confined in the dark and then brought into the full light of day. We should say: "Now you see everything." Not intending that everything in the world is actually looked upon, but that there is now capacity and light with which to see, all is now perceivable, available, and at your disposal.

So the true light now shines (1 John 2. 8), and all is seen in that true light that is seen by spiritual eyes. "The darkness is past."

2. IN FULNESS. "All things." In Christ all is ours. "All the riches of knowledge and wisdom"

that dwell in Him, the Spirit, is ours, to lead us and to enrich us with it.

It is as though a man eager for knowledge is given an admission into the British Museum Library, and being introduced into it is told, "Now you know everything." It is all there and all at your disposal.

3. IN TEACHING. "The anointing you have received of Him abideth in you . . . the same anointing teaching you of all things."

The Spirit is an infallible teacher. None need err nor be deceived. If you submit the heart and mind to His teaching "you know the truth" (v. 21), for He leads into all truth.

And this in all things—"you know all things." Not for curiosity, for the lust of knowledge, but all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1. 3). He will lead you into and teach all you need for a holy life, for doing the whole will of God.

4. IN CERTAINTY. The things the Spirit teaches we *know*. There is no doubt, no misgiving, but Divine conviction. Light is a self-evident thing; we know light instinctively when we see it, and so does the Spirit-filled man know truth. Like the blind man he says, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I can see."

What in practice does this mean? *It means I need never be in doubt as to God's mind and will.*

It is commonly said, "There are many and varied teachings and ideas, and they all assert that they take them from the Bible."

True, there are, but the assertion is not true. They do not take them from the Bible, they add them

to it, and seek to corrupt the Word of God to back up their fancies.

It is generally only badly instructed and unspiritual Christians or unbelievers who seriously talk like this.

Those who have received the Spirit and walk by the Spirit know that it is not so. Let us state the actual truth on the matter.

(1). The Word of God illuminated by the Spirit of God is simple and clear on all matters pertaining to life and godliness (Isa. 35. 8).

(2). Preconception, prejudice, and pride blind the eyes so that the Light is dimmed (John 5. 44). Therefore to know the Truth the heart must be honest and the eye single (Matt. 6. 22).

(3). Obedience to the Truth is a condition precedent to the knowledge of it. God does not show us truth that we may trifle with it, nor submit it to us for our choice.

"If any willeth to do His will he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7. 17). Let these things be right and the Spirit will teach us all things.

(4). Man's teaching is not needed. *"Ye need not that any man teach you."*

There are teachers appointed and gifted of God to teach the Word, but there their authority ceases. As to its true meaning, only the Spirit can show us.

It is here men fail and are misled. As soon as some question of obedience to the Word is raised by the Spirit in the heart, they run to their teachers and ask their opinion, and as often as not have the convictions of the Spirit quenched by carnal reasoning and they remain in the darkness of disobedience.

I once contended with a Romish priest. He urged the diversity of interpretations, and asked, "Who is to say what it means?" Desiring, of course, to lead to this, that the Pope was the only one who could say authoritatively what the Word means. Opening the Bible at 1 John 2. 27, I placed it in his hand and asked him to read it aloud: "Ye have no need that any man (even he admitted the Pope to be a man) teach you . . . the Anointing teacheth you." I put it to him thus. In a little while you and I (if we are truly born of God) will stand before our Divine Lord at His Judgment Seat, and the Word will judge us in that Day. We shall have to give an account of our handling of it, and the question will be, Did we do as we were bidden with that Word? Did we search it, spread it before the Lord, and really seek the teaching of the Spirit as to its meaning, honestly purposing, when light on it was given, to yield to it the obedience of faith? Or did we turn to men, of whom we were forewarned: "Ye need not that any man teach you?" He answered merely, "Oh, that is very vague." But wisdom is justified of her children And how beautiful is that wisdom from above. Listen to the description.

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (James 3. 17).

So we are equipped by the Spirit. "We know all things," we may walk surely and boldly in the true light, the darkness is past.

YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER.

"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1. 8).

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"That ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15. 13).

* * * * *

"That your faith should not rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (2 Cor. 2. 5).

* * * * *

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory" (Eph. 3. 20, 21).

CHAPTER XXV

"Ye Shall Receive Power"

BY sin man not only became darkened, but he became weak, "without strength." He has no power to recover himself; so that he needs not only to be redeemed from guilt by precious blood, but to be delivered by power from the servitude into which he has fallen.

This salvation or deliverance is proposed to him in the Gospel, and the means whereby it is accomplished is stated in the Word. *"Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you."*

It is in the power of the Spirit that he recovers himself from the snare of the Devil (2 Tim. 2. 26).

It is this recovery that so often troubles the child of God. Power fails him, and he remains in measure the servant of sin, who should be free.

Let us, then, answer three simple questions.

1. When is power received?
2. In what does it consist?
3. How is it enjoyed?

I. WHEN IS POWER RECEIVED.

The answer is plainly given in the text. Ye shall receive power when? *When the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*

That, you will remember, was when you received

Christ. It was when "by the hearing of faith" the miracle of your conversion was wrought.

Then why does power fail me? Suffer an illustration. Some years ago a company built and equipped a factory. It was to be worked by electric power, the supply of which was to be obtained from the generating station in the neighbourhood. The wires were connected, all was ready, but still the supply was withheld. At length a letter was received in reply to many urgent calls, as follows: "You will receive power to-morrow at 8 a.m." The next day silently and unseen the power came and the machinery that had up till then stood still was soon full of life and energy.

So to the sinner without strength comes the message of the Gospel, Receive Christ as Lord and Saviour, and the promise of the Father shall be yours. "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2. 38), and when He is come "Ye shall receive power."

Where the Spirit is there is the power. Not always enjoyed, for, like the power supplied to the factory, it needs to be used and rightly applied to the machinery, and it is here that some fail.

But the power has been received with the Spirit. It is there, and by His precious working applied to life and action in the case of those who walk by the Spirit.

The "I can't" of the unbeliever and "Alas!" of the carnal believer, becomes the "I can" of the spiritual man. For with the Spirit given was the power supplied; so that if we have received the Spirit we have received the power.

II. In what does the Power consist?

In the precious enabling to do the will of God. That and that only. Let us, however, first consider some common mistakes upon the subject.

(1). *It does not consist in emotional experiences, ecstasies,* or in striking and remarkable effects or sensations. While these have accompanied all great movements of God, they are not of the essence of them, and are usually sources of weakness and not power.

(2). *It does not consist in the ability of a preacher to excite an audience and to produce a thrill.* An actor can do this, and that with the most evil performance.

(3). *Nor does a mesmeric or hypnotic spell cast over an audience* indicate the power of God. True, the audience will stand up, put up hands, profess conversion; indeed, do anything required under such a psychological influence, and by it temporary healings of nervous disorders take place; but such is not the power of God, as the after reaction shows.

(4). *Miracle-working is not of necessity a display of God's power,* and must not be relied upon as a certificate of credit for the one who uses it.

We are solemnly warned against miracles in these last days (see 2 Thess. 2. 9; John 4. 48; Luke 11. 29; 1 Cor. 1. 22), for demons and evil-workers will do them. The Apostasy has always traded in them.

Men have desired all these things *for their own glory* and satisfaction. The love of power is part of man's fallen nature. He would be as a god, he would be able to bow others to his will; he would be acclaimed as "wonderful." But all this is pride and

vainglory, grievous in God's sight. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not" (Jer. 45. 5).

Wherein is the power of God manifest? As before stated: *In gracious enabling to do all the will of God.*

This will in particular include—

1. *Power to "lay aside the sin which doth so easily beset us," and so walk at liberty from every evil habit.*

The promise is, "Sin shall not have dominion over you," and this is made effective to us by the Spirit of God. The one who walks by the Spirit finds himself able to cease to do evil.

We shall return to this in later papers.

2. *Power to confess Christ before men and to take up the Cross daily.*

This is a thing the flesh shrinks from and the natural man cannot do, for the Cross and the flesh can never agree.

Yet tens of thousands of believers, often retiring and naturally nervous, have been enabled gladly and freely to confess their Lord and daily to bear the reproach attached to the confession of His Name. The "Cross" being the reproach of Christ (Heb. 13. 13). In this is the power of the Spirit seen.

3. *Power to deny self, to walk humbly, and to become a living sacrifice* (Rom. 12. 1).

There is nothing the worldly man despises more than humility, and nothing the natural man shrinks more from than sacrifice. Yet in these two outstanding graces the believer is most like his Lord, Who was "meek and lowly in heart," "who pleased not Himself," and "loved us and gave Himself for us."

Where these are seen there is the power of the Spirit manifested.

Let those then who boast of the power of the Spirit know wherein it really lies.

4. *Power to be holy*, that is, to manifest in walk, speech, and conduct the spirit and likeness of Christ: walking "holily and unblameably in love"; exhibiting "the meekness and gentleness of Christ"; to be unto God in every place "a sweet savour of Christ." This is where the power of the Spirit is seen in its most glorious manifestation; but how different from what most mean by "power"!

5. *The power of the Spirit in public ministry* is not recognised in display, in oratory, or emotion; not in persuasive words of man's wisdom, nor in great learning, but in two things:

(*a*) *Authority*. It is said of Christ, "He taught them as one having authority, not as the Scribes," and this will mark the God-sent and Spirit-filled preacher. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God"; that is, with authority, having "Thus saith the Lord" as his warrant. "If they speak not according to My Word it is because there is no light in them."

(*b*) *Utterance*. Which means that what he says he is commissioned by the Spirit to say. He is merely giving forth that which the Spirit has exercised his heart about. He is delivering *a message* only, a God-given word for the people on that occasion. Better be silent and wait on the Lord, until, like Jeremiah, the word of the Lord is in the heart "as a burning fire shut up in my bones," so that he was "weary with forbearing and could not stay" (20. 9), than utter

platitudes or powerless talk (see also Eccles. 5. 1-7). It was for utterance that Paul prayed.

Words spoken thus in the Spirit will not excite but command the conscience; convict the heart; and comfort and edify the believer. This is power in speaking.

III. How is the Power Enjoyed?

The power of the Spirit accompanies faith and obedience. Whenever we do the Lord's will in humble dependence on Him, the Spirit's power accompanies us to enable us to accomplish it.

He works in us to will and to do of God's good pleasure.

We need not wait to feel it, nor to "realise" it (a word too often used), but *believe* it and act accordingly. Faith does not ask signs nor sensible evidences. It relies and depends on God. He has said, He will perform. It steps out to do His will, resting on His Word, and is sure He will not fail.

A Few Simple Illustrations.

Peter asked Jesus to let him walk to Him on the water, and Jesus said, "Come." So Peter stepped out of the boat in the obedience of faith, and found the unstable water was firm beneath his feet.

The life of faith is like walking on water: impossible to the natural man; but when faith acts in obedience it is possible.

Again, the ten lepers who stood afar off and cried to Jesus for mercy, were bidden go and show themselves to the priest. They obeyed, and *as they went* they

were cleansed. The power of the Spirit accompanies the obedience of faith.

The servants at Cana were bidden to fill the water pots with water. They obeyed, and the water blushed to wine.

"Fill the water pots with water,
Fill them to the very brim;
Do exactly as He tells you,
Leave the miracle to Him."

No one ever set out in the obedience of faith to do the Lord's will but found the power of the Spirit accompany him.

The power of the Spirit is ever upon the obedience of faith.

THE LOVE OF GOD SHED ABROAD.

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5. 5).

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"If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us" (1 John 4. 12).

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"Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another" (1 Thess. 4. 9).

* * * * *

"The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5. 14).

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Love of God Shed Abroad

A THIRD sorrow that came upon man by sin was the loss of love. "God is Love," and man made in His likeness must have shared that excellent grace.

But as by sin, darkness and weakness came, so also did hate. As the Apostle describes it, "We ourselves also were sometimes . . . living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another" (Titus 3. 3).

There remains amid the ruin some measure of natural affection, for even the heathen "love them which love you" (Matt. 5. 46); but this is far removed from that "studied denial of self in the interest of others," that unaffected "purpose to do good even to the enemy" which is the Christian love, so vividly described in 1 Corinthians 13, that "suffers long and is kind," and that was exemplified in the Lord Jesus. That love is a necessary equipment for Christian life and service, is obvious.

Eloquence, speaking with the tongues of men and angels; *knowledge*; *faith* that can remove mountains; *liberality*, that bestows all its goods to feed the poor; and even *martyrdom*, that gives its body to be burnt, are nothing, and profitless, apart from Love (1 Cor. 13. 1-3) All Christian excellence is summed up in

this: "Thou shalt love." And this love is supplied by the Spirit.

"The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which was given unto us" (Rom. 5. 5, R.V.).

Just as all knowledge and all power have been made available by the gift of the Holy Spirit, so has all love. "Ye *know* all," "Ye *can* all," "Ye *love* all."

This is true of the Spirit-filled man.

There are three ways in which the Holy Spirit has shed abroad this love.

1. *In knowledge and experience of the love of God.* We can say by the Spirit: "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us" (1 John 4. 16). Faith has been quickened to see that perfect love by the Spirit's enlightenment. It was *manifested* at the Cross (1 John 3. 9), and there we *perceived* it (2. 16). We exclaim: "Behold *what manner of love* the Father has bestowed upon us" (3. 1). It has cast out all fear (4. 18). It has taught us, in turn, to love (4. 19, R.V.).

This is the evident meaning of the context of Romans 5. 5.

The Apostle is teaching how the believer can rejoice in tribulations (a thing the world has never done), and he says it is because in the tribulations an experience of God's love is realised. In the trouble, patience was given and an experience that bred hope and removed all shame. In the sorrow there was found mighty love, the love of God. Tears were lit up with the consolation and comfort of the Spirit. God's love was known in the cloud and storm

as never before. One walked with the afflicted saint in the fiery furnace of trial. The rainbow of promise with its radiant colours was seen in the dark thunder cloud. What saint, though he trembled as he went into the cloud, has not blessed God for his experience there of the love of God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost in his heart?

2. *In its constraining power.* "The love of Christ constraineth us," because the Spirit has not only convicted us of its truth and shown us its length and breadth, depth and height, but so satisfied our hearts with it that we are thereby constrained to two great purposes (2 Cor. 5. 14, 15).

(*a*) *To reckon ourselves dead* with Him.

(*b*) *To live henceforth not unto ourselves,* but unto Him who died for us and rose again.

This is no rare experience, the portion only of some exalted saint, but God worketh this every day with His people.

Who that has worked among young people has not seen this gracious and powerful work of the Spirit?

Going home to confess Christ, they refuse any more to live "as though living in the world." They reckon they are "dead with Christ" as to such former pursuits. They have cast in their lot with Him for life. Where He goes they must go, in life or death, and His people are their people.

Soon their good works appear. They begin to live "not unto themselves," but for Him whom, not having seen, they love. Some work is found, some opportunity is sought where the constraining love may have

its outlet—the Sunday school, the mission, the slum, or the wider foreign mission field.

3. *In the Savour of Christ,* in the character and walk. For the love of Christ not only constrains to work, but is the crown and beauty of the personal life.

One has only to look at the faces of some spiritual men and women to see the grace and tenderness of the love of God written there.

A fellow-evangelist, now gone to his reward, once invited the Infidel Club at Northampton to hear him lecture on Infidelity. They came in a body, and in the course of his lecture my friend remarked: "Infidels are, moreover, the ugliest set of men in the world." This was a hard saying indeed, and afterwards the president of the club came and thanked my friend for the lecture, but complained that he had gone out of his way to insult them by the remark. My friend invited him to call on him the following day, which he did. He was received in the library, in which hung the oil paintings of the father and mother of the host, godly people whose lives had been spent in the service of Christ. My friend pointed to the portraits and called attention to the light of peace and grace that was indelibly written upon the faces. "Infidelity never produced such faces," he added; "only the love of God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost can do so."

Character is more even than work, and the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost produces such character as is described in the words: "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in every place" (2 Cor. 2. 15).

Some have loved to think that it is not merely the knowledge of God's love thus shed abroad constraining and transforming life and walk that is intended, but *God's own love imparted to us*, so that there is in our hearts the same love that moves His great heart of love. It is, however, surely a theoretical difference only. It is the fact of the love and not the explanation of it that matters, and all that love, like the knowledge and the power, is ours by the Holy Spirit of promise.

THE LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT.

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3. 17).

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"If ye continue in My Word then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8. 31, 32).

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"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8. 36).

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"Ye have been called unto liberty" (Gal. 5. 13).

CHAPTER XXVII

Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is Liberty

A FOURTH sorrow that has fallen on man by sin is bondage, slavery.

"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8. 34). And not only servitude to sin, but bondage of many other kinds afflicts the weakened sinner, who is in his helplessness the prey to all the powers of darkness, "the world rulers of this darkness and hosts of wicked spirits" (Eph. 6. 12, R.V.) that haunt and enslave man's soul.

The Lord Jesus came to set the captive free, to open the prison doors, and loose the dwellers in darkness.

> " . . . Where'er He reigns,
> The prisoner leaps to loose his chains."

And this He does by redemption and power. His redeeming blood has discharged all the claims of sin and death and hell, and now the gift of the Holy Spirit has been given to bring the prisoner by power out of the house of bondage.

We are called unto liberty. The Lord would have His people free.

What is liberty? It is not the same as license. As Chas. Kingsley wrote: "There are two kinds of liberty: The false, which is liberty to do what I

like; and the true, liberty to do what is right." In other words, liberty is deliverance from every power, influence, or affection that would hinder us from doing the whole will of God. *Liberty is freedom to "serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life"* (Luke 1. 74, 75).

And "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." As there is wisdom and power and love, so there is liberty for those who have received the Spirit.

This liberty is much treated of in Scripture. It is a glorious gift, a great equipment, to be delivered from all our enemies, to be free, free—unhindered, untramelled, free to do His will who has redeemed us, not only from all iniquity, but unto Himself.

In three Epistles we have freedom largely set before us—

In Romans—Freedom from *sin.*

In Galatians—Freedom from *law.*

In Colossians—Freedom from *man.*

Let us consider them in turn.

I. IN ROMANS—FREEDOM FROM SIN.

The teaching on the subject of freedom in this Epistle is summed up in chapter 6, where we have three times over the expression, "Free from sin."

In verse 7. He that is dead is *freed from sin.*

Verse 18. "Being then made *free from sin,* ye become servants of righteousness."

Verse 22. "Now being made *free from sin* . . . ye have your fruit unto holiness."

In the R.V. the first of these (v. 7) is rendered: "He that died is justified from sin," for the word

"free" has the value of discharged or acquitted; so that the three passages teach us in what sense the believer is free from sin.

Verse 7. From its *condemnation,* being justified.

Verse 18. From its *dominion* (v. 14).

Verse 22. From its *fruit.*

From the first of these the precious blood has cleansed us, our guilt having been removed on the ground of the once-for-all Sacrifice on Calvary. That death being reckoned our death, having died we are justified. Deliverance from the dominion or rule of sin is made ours by the Spirit, as it is written: "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

Sin cannot reign where the ungrieved Spirit has sway, for where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

And the freedom from the fruit of sin, fruit of which we are now ashamed (v. 21); follows as of course, for where sin cannot reign it cannot bear fruit.

II. IN GALATIANS—FREEDOM FROM LAW.

Man has never been able to find either salvation or liberty by the works of the Law.

Liberty is not by external precepts, but by the indwelling Spirit.

It was therefore necessary, if man was to be free to do the whole will of God, that he should be led by the Spirit, and for that purpose he must be free from the bondage of Law. A legal spirit is contrary to all the liberty of the children of God. The child of God must not have his eyes upon laws graven upon stone, but upon Christ, who by the Spirit writes His will upon

the fleshy tables of the heart; so that the "I must" becomes "I love to do Thy will." This is the Spirit's work, and entails perfect deliverance from the Law and the legal spirit. And that in three particulars:

(1) *From its Curse* (Gal. 3. 13). For "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, *that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*"

The curse being removed, the Spirit comes to reside, and by His gracious indwelling we are then set free.

(2) *From its Obligations.* For the Law with its 630 precepts was a burden that the fathers were unable to bear (Acts 15. 10)—a galling "yoke upon the neck," with its multiplicity of obligations and restrictions.

That grace has ever been above Law, the Lord Himself taught us. David was not allowed to starve because the Law forbade the shewbread to be eaten by any but the priests (Mark 2. 26).

An ox or ass was not to go unwatered; or, if fallen into a pit, was not to be left to perish there because the Law would forbid the labour of pulling it out on the Sabbath (Luke 13. 15; 14. 5).

In these, and in a thousand other things, grace surpasses Law, and in Christ "grace reigns."

(3) *From its Fear and Spirit of Bondage.* The Law "gendereth to bondage." The Law is like Hagar, "in bondage with her children." She can only beget slaves, but those after the Spirit are like Isaac, children of promise, sons of the free (see Gal. 4. 21-31).

There is no peace, love, or joy to the mind that is legal. It feels the yoke and frets against it.

Allow a simple illustration. A family of little children lived in the nursery under the direction of a governess, who for their better discipline had drawn up a list of nursery rules, and had it hung up before their eyes. Often they smarted under the penalties imposed for the breech of these rules.

On mother's birthday the children were invited, to their great joy, to tea with mother downstairs.

One of the little ones asked in the innocence of its heart, "Shall we bring the nursery rules with us, mother?" and the reply, "No, my darling, we shall not need them; you love me too well to require them on my birthday." How they enjoyed that day! The liberty of children with its royal law of love.

III. COLOSSIANS—FREEDOM FROM MAN.

Man has ever been man's greatest oppressor, and specially in the religious world.

"Man's inhumanity to man" has been displayed in the realms of religious bigotry and ecclesiastical oppression more cruelly and desperately than in any other. The apostasy down the ages has been "drunken with the blood of the saints," who in inquisitions, councils, and torture chambers have shed untold blood and tears. We must cease from man if we are to be free.

(1) From the *Fear of Man* that bringeth a snare (Prov. 29. 25).

(2) From the *Doctrines of Man* (Matt. 15. 9). For Christ said: "In vain do they worship Me, *teaching for*

doctrines the commandments of men"; and Isaiah laments for a people "who draw near to Me with their mouth and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and *their fear toward Me is taught by the precepts of men*" (Isa. 29. 13).

(3) From the *Commandments, Ordinances, and Rules of Man.* "Why are ye subject (subject yourselves, R.V.) to ordinances . . . after the commandment and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2. 22).

"We ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5. 29).

"Ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal. 4. 10, 11).

Let us look at Colossians 2. 16-23 and note what is said there of this liberty from man.

1. *We are to let no man judge our liberty.* Shadows such as meat and drink, holy days and Sabbaths have passed away. The body is Christ (vv. 16, 17).

2. *We are to let no man beguile us* (v. 18), that is, persuade us to turn to things that do not profit. Voluntary humility, worshipping of angels, dwelling in externals—they would rob us of our reward.

3. *We are not to be subject to man's ordinances* (v. 20). The old elementary rudiments of a legal age are for those "living in the world" (having an earthly temple and worship). We are seated in the heavenlies with Christ, and are a spiritual people with a sanctuary in Heaven.

"Touch not," "taste not," "handle not." Such

commandments of men have no value. They perish with the using (vv. 21, 22).

4. *We are not to be wilful in worship.* True "voluntary humility," "neglecting the body," fasting, etc., have *a show of wisdom.* They gratify religious pride and self-righteousness, they "puff up the fleshly mind" (v. 18), but they are *"not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh"* (v. 23, R.V.).

The flesh is not subdued by fasting, nor pride by whipping, nor worldliness by neglect of the body. These are of "no avail" though men glory in them. Only the Spirit brings into true liberty.

O to hear the word of the Lord in these matters and to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5. 1).

To be free in all these respects let us take the Word of God as our guide, and, taught by the Spirit of Truth, yield to it the obedience of faith, and we shall be enfranchised. And "If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed."

"FREE INDEED."

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8. 36).

Tune: *Winsford*. *Golden Bells*, 277.

1. O Son of God, my Saviour dear,
   If Thou dost set me free,
   And loose my bonds of guilt and fear,
   I shall be free indeed.

   Chorus: Free indeed, free indeed,
   For if the Son shall make you free
   Ye shall be free indeed.

2. Lord, I would know the daily power
   That *keeps* Thy children free,
   The glorious liberty of sons
   From all iniquity.

3. And I would know the saving grace
   That conquers every foe,
   That opens wide the prison door
   And bids the captive go.

4. Call me with Thy life-giving voice,
   That I may rise again;
   And from the grave-clothes set me free,
   In life by Thee to reign.

G.G.

PART V

THE CONTINUING WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

"By One Offering He (Christ) hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, *whereof the Holy Ghost is a witness to us*: for after He hath said, this is the covenant, etc., . . . then saith He, Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10. 14-7, R.V.).

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"It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is Truth" (1 John 5. 6).

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"The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8. 16).

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"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the Witness in himself" (1 John 5. 10).

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"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2. 9, 10).

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Witness of the Spirit

WE have seen the work of the Spirit in the world, resulting in the conviction and conversion of sinners to Christ, so that receiving Christ they receive with Him and from Him the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We have also seen that when He, the Spirit, is received He at once takes up His abode in the body of the saved one, regenerates and baptises him into the body of Christ, and is thereafter the seal, earnest, firstfruits, and anointing in the believer.

These are His first, His initial work in the child of God.

We have further seen how He equips the one in whom He dwells with wisdom, power, love, and liberty, so that all these things are theirs at once in Christ, by the Spirit. We have now to discuss the continuous operation of the Spirit in the new life of the believer after his conversion to God.

Having received the Spirit, he walks in newness of life by that Spirit.

It need scarcely be said that *the supply of wisdom, power, love, and liberty is maintained* in the believer by the Spirit. In practice these things are enjoyed in varying degree and measure according to the spiritual perception, faith, and obedience of each,

but they are the glorious portion of every child of God.

There are not two kinds of Christians, but many degrees of walk. Some are carnal and walk as men, others spiritual and walk holily and unblameably in love, and between these two extremes there is every degree, some even fluctuating—at one time walking carnally and at others spiritually. There are, however, no two kinds; beware of the spiritual pride that assumes a superior platform, for such "comparing themselves among themselves are not wise" (2 Cor. 10. 12). Rather with the Apostle confess to being "less than the least of all saints" (Eph. 3. 8).

The first continuous operation of the Spirit of which we shall speak is

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

The Spirit, we read, "witnesseth with our spirits." This He does, as we see from Hebrews 10. 15, *through the Scriptures*, for there the Spirit's witness is quoted from Jeremiah 31. 33, where the New Covenant is promised.

But the testimony of the Spirit is also *direct to our spirits*, for he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. This is the comfort of the Holy Ghost, an assurance or conviction that no argument can give, however weighty and well founded. The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of Light, and He shines into our hearts; a Spirit of Truth, and He convinces our minds, so "that we know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2. 12) by the Spirit.

1. *He Witnesses to the Lordship of Christ.* "No man

can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12. 3).

That does not mean that a man cannot say the words; we know from Matthew 7. 21 that many do so, who do not enter the kingdom nor do the will of God, but no one will ascribe true Lordship to Christ, so that the heart is bowed to Him in the obedience of faith and love and so that He is sanctified as Lord in the heart (1 Peter 3. 15, R.V.) but by that Spirit. Moreover, it is by walking in the Spirit that Christ is in actual fact and practice habitually yielded that place.

2. *He Witnesses to the Finished Work of Christ.* The beautiful passage in Hebrews 10. 10-18 above quoted speaks to us of the Will of God, the Work of the Son, and the Witness of the Spirit.

In the Will of God the Father, the Son of God offered Himself without spot to God, and He by that one offering "perfected for ever" those being sanctified. Of this glorious fact the Holy Spirit is a witness to us, in the Scriptures and in our hearts enlightening us to understand and unfolding the Scriptures to our opened understanding, so that we are enabled to rest upon and rejoice in that perfect acceptance, perfect standing, and perfect approach that we have through the Blood of Jesus. In this witness He anticipated the event (1 Peter 1. 11).

3. *"He Witnesses to our being Children of God."* "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8. 16). Not merely by showing from Scripture who and what are the children, but by convicting us that we are truly

such as are therein described, so that we "read our title clear" and rejoice with the full assurance of faith and knowledge.

We are therefore said to have received the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry Abba Father (Rom. 8. 15). This filial spirit He maintains in us, as we walk in the Spirit, so that we enjoy the liberty of the children, that holy boldness and freedom of access to His presence and communion with Him, that marks an obedient child with a gracious father.

4. *He Witnesses to the Blessedness Reserved in Christ for us.* "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (1 Cor. 2. 9, 10).

In this gracious work He fulfils the promise of Christ. "He shall take of Mine and shew it unto you" (John 16. 14, 15). This extends not only to present blessing, but to the future. "He shall shew you things to come."

Because the Spirit has access to all the eternal counsels of God, "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2. 10), He is able to teach us all the will of God, all the riches of Christ, and all the glories of our inheritance as joint-heirs with Christ.

5. *He witnesses to the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ.* "He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Thus the Spirit says, Come, to the long-expected

Lord (Rev. 22. 17-20), and the Bride re-echoes the cry, "Come."

It is this witness of the Spirit to the coming again of Christ that makes it so great a power in our lives. It is no theory or cold doctrine, but a blessed hope that leads us to purify ourselves even as He is pure in anticipation of that glorious event.

"O joy, O delight, should we go without dying,
No sickness, no sadness, no dread, and no crying;
Caught up through the clouds with our Lord into glory,
When Jesus receives 'His Own.'"

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT

"This is the Will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4. 3).

"Christ is made unto us . . . Sanctification" (1 Cor. 1. 30).

"Every one should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour " (1 Thess. 4. 4).

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth" (2 Thess. 2. 13).

"Elect . . . through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1. 2).

[These with Rom. 6. 19, 22; 1 Thess. 4. 7; 1 Tim. 2. 15; and Heb. 12. 14, where the same word is translated "holiness," are the only uses of the noun 'sanctification' in the N.T.]

The believer is spoken of as *"sanctified"* in the following Scriptures:

John 17. 19, "through the truth"; Acts 20. 32 and 26. 18, "by faith"; Romans 15. 16, "by the Holy Ghost"; 1 Corinthians 1. 2, "in Christ Jesus"; 1 Corinthians 6. 11, "in the Name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of our God"; Hebrews 10. 29, "by the blood of the Covenant"; Jude 1, "by God the Father."

CHAPTER XXIX

Sanctification of the Spirit

THE outstanding work of the Holy Spirit is the sanctification of the sons of God.

This work of sanctification is ascribed in turn to all the Three Persons of the Godhead.

"Them that are sanctified by God the Father" (Jude 1).

"Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own Blood suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13. 12).

"God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2. 13).

This need, however, cause no confusion of thought when we recall the division already quoted: The *will* of God; the *work* of Christ; the *witness* of the Spirit.

The Father wills our sanctification (1 Thess. 4. 3). The Son by His finished work has effected it for us (Heb. 10. 10), and the Spirit witnesses to it and works it in us.

It is this sanctification of the Spirit with which we have particularly to deal.

Sanctification is viewed in Scripture in two ways:

As an *outward consecration,* or setting apart.

As an *inward purification,* or transformation.

The one is effected once for all. "We *have been*

sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." The other is continuous and progressive. We are those who are "*being* sanctified."

It may interest some to read the definition of sanctification, in the latter sense, of the greatest of Puritan writers, John Owen.

"*Sanctification is an immediate*" (that is, 'direct,' not 'instantaneous') "*work of the Spirit of God on the souls of believers, purifying and cleansing of their natures from the pollution and uncleanness of sin, renewing in them the image of God, and thereby enabling them, from a spiritual and habitual principle of grace, to yield obedience unto God, according unto the tenor and terms of the New Covenant, by virtue of the life and death of Jesus Christ.*"

Or, he adds more briefly:

"*It is the universal renovation of our natures by the Holy Spirit into the image of God, through Jesus Christ.*"

This sanctification of the Spirit is brought before us in the Scriptures in the following ways:

1. IN ELECTION. God chose us, we read, from the beginning through sanctification of the Spirit (2 Thess. 2. 13).

Or again, "We were elect through sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Peter 1. 2).

God, having made the choice, puts us in His Divine counsels among the elect. The Holy Spirit gives effect to it, and in due order brings us by His gracious working unto the obedience of faith, so that we know the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1. 2), and being born again begin to walk in the newness of life wrought in us by the Spirit.

This sanctification of the Spirit precedes in order of time the justification of the sinner. "But ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6. 11). "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15. 18).

2. IN THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL. That far more excellent ministry than Law, (so beautifully set before us in 1 Corinthians 3. 1-18).

The believer is "an Epistle of Christ," a letter for all to read; written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God; not on stone tablets, as was the Law, "but in fleshy tables of the heart" (v. 3).

In the Gospel the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, as we have already seen, and brings to repentance; reveals and bears witness to the finished work of Christ, so that the sinner believes and receives the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

So he becomes an Epistle of Christ, "known and read of all men."

3. BY WRITING THE LAW OF GOD IN THE MIND AND ON THE HEART (Heb. 8. 10). Thus creating in the believer a hatred of sin and a love of holiness.

His mind being enlightened by the Spirit and the Word, he *knows* the truth. His heart being affected and renewed, he *loves* it.

In this is fulfilled the words of the prophets (spoken in the first place to Israel, but true of all the Israel of God).

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you (the Word of God, John 15. 3; Eph. 5. 26) *and ye shall be*

clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart (desire and affection) *also will I give you, and a new spirit* (will and purpose) *will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart* (hard and disobedient) *out of your flesh; and I will give you a heart of flesh* (feeling and responsive); *and I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them"* (Ezek. 36. 25-27).

Herein is the most practical aspect of the sanctification of the Spirit.

The natural man, the carnal mind, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; but the renewed man is so subject. The Spirit works in him this *obedience of faith and love,*; and this, without forcing man's will, but drawing him with the cords of love, He causes him to walk in the ways of God.

The believer thus learns two great lessons: his total and absolute inability to obey God or please Him in the flesh (Rom. 8. 8), and the glorious and happy possibility of doing so in the Spirit. He sings with unspeakable joy: "I can through Christ."

The law of the Spirit of Life thus sets him free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8. 2).

4. BY CHANGING INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST. This is expressly set before us in 2 Corinthians 3. 18 as the special ministry of the Spirit.

Note the points of this impressive passage.

(1) *The Unveiled Face.* "We all with unveiled face." The "veil" is unbelief, but having turned to the Lord that veil has been taken away. We have become

believers (not merely believed). The stony, evil heart of unbelief has been taken away.

(2) *The Mirror.* This is the Gospel, the subject of the whole chapter. The Spirit ministers Christ through the Gospel, and in the Gospel (now preserved to us in the New Testament, the writings of the prophets, Rom. 16. 26) we see—what?

(3) *The Glory of the Lord,* for the Spirit witnesses of Christ, revealing to the enraptured heart of the believer His grace and all-sufficiency in all things.

In a photographer's window stood a beautiful enlargement of a portrait; on it was thrown a strong light from a hidden electric lamp. The lamp could not be seen, but it served to illumine the portrait and thus display its beauties.

So the Holy Spirit, not occupying us with Himself, delights to show us in the "mirror of the Word," the glories of Christ.

(4) *The Change.* "Are changed into the same image." Here is the great work of sanctification by the Spirit.

To conform us to Christ, to transform us into His likeness, so that the beauty of the Lord our God is seen upon us. This is holiness.

(5) *The Process.* "From glory to glory." Not a sudden change, for character is ever a matter of growth, but from one blessed revelation and experience of Christ to another; so that the dawning of that Great Light upon us is as the dawning of the morning that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

And this is, we are told, *"As from the Lord the Spirit."* It is the more excellent ministry of the New Covenant (v. 8).

SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY SANCTIFIED.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" (2 Cor. 7. 1).

* * * * *

"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6. 19, 20).

* * * * *

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5. 23, 24).

Chapter XXX

The Whole Spirit, Soul, and Body Sanctified

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5. 23, 24).

This beautiful verse of Prayer, Promise, and Prospect has rejoiced the hearts of the saints of God all down the ages.

The prayer so exactly expresses the yearning desire of the regenerate heart, while the promise based upon the faithfulness of the very God of Peace encourages and strengthens the faith and the anticipation of the coming of Christ, adds a touch that kindles the love and hope of the believer, and leads him to purify himself (1 John 3. 3).

The first thing we note is that the sanctification of the Spirit reaches the whole man—spirit, soul and body.

In order to understand these three words we should think thus—man *is* a soul, he has a spirit and a body.

"The Lord God formed man . . . and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2. 7). This is quoted in 1 Corinthians 15. 45 thus: "The first man Adam was made a living soul."

Man, being a soul, has a spirit, with which he can communicate with God, and he has a body in which he can communicate with his fellow-man.

Man, the soul; "I," the ego, is the personality, the seat of mind, will, and desire (together referred to in Scripture as "the heart," or inner man, *"The hidden man of the heart."*) *The Body* is the house in which he lives temporarily, *"the earthly house of this tabernacle,"* through and by means of which he does his business in the world. *The spirit* is the seat of God-consciousness, when quickened from the death into which by sin it has fallen (Jude 19, R.V., "Having not spirit") but (Rom. 8. 10) when quickened "the spirit is life because of righteousness."

The soul and body thus constitute the natural man, while the spirit is in the believer the renewed man.

The adjectives "soulish" (translated sensual—living in the senses) and "spiritual" (minding the things of the spirit) perhaps help us to understand the distinction.

The prayer for this threefold sanctification may be expressed thus:

(1) That our spiritual life and disposition may be preserved blameless and be holy.

(2) That our mind may be clean, healthy, and exercised with holy things.

(3) That our bodies may be used only for good and holy purposes.

Let us consider, then, what is said of these:

1. THE SPIRIT PRESERVED BLAMELESS. The entreaty of 2 Corinthians 7. 1 is very searching. "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and

spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."

If the flesh is indulged the spirit becomes defiled. "The spirit is the recipient through the flesh, and when the recipient, the retainer and propagator of uncleanness. The exhortation is general against impure acts and impure thoughts" (Alford).

If the *"Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with our spirits"* (Gal. 6. 18), as the Apostle prayed, they will continue blameless; we shall have the "meek and quiet spirit," "the spirit of holiness," and serve in "newness of spirit" (Rom. 7. 6).

How beautiful is such a disposition. Twice does the Apostle end an Epistle thus: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit" (2 Tim. and Philem.), for it is with the spirit that we commune with Him, and when He is with our spirits all is well.

2. THE MIND PRESERVED BLAMELESS. The mind is the thinking machine, as distinct from the disposition, the spirit.

It thinks, of course, on what is supplied to it.

How solemn then is the responsibility to see that it is preserved blameless and occupied with holy things.

Here so many fail. They often imagine they may think what they like; but this is false. Sinful thinking is as guilty a thing as sinful doing. This is the great teaching of the sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5. 21, 27 and 43.)

It is therefore in the secret thoughts of the heart that the believer must mortify by the Spirit the suggestions and motions of sin, that the mind may be kept undefiled, blameless.

And positively he should "have the mind of Christ," letting "that mind that was in Him be in him."

Every thought must be brought into captivity to Christ.

Every thought, every book, every amusement, entertainment, or association that panders to the flesh and creates evil thoughts must be honestly renounced as one of the "hidden things of dishonesty" that the mind may ever be blameless and holy. The fleshly mind, the earthly mind, the vanity of the mind and the defiled mind—against all these we are warned; but "girding up the loins of our mind" we are to set our affections on things above, where Christ is, and on whatosever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, we are to dwell in thought on all that has virtue and praise in it (Phil. 4. 8).

A mind preserved blameless and sanctified is an untold blessing to the possessor and a mine of wealth and beauty to others.

3. THE BODY PRESERVED BLAMELESS. This is specially to be effected in four particulars.

(1) It is to be recognised as the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and not defiled (1 Cor. 3. 17; 6. 9).

(2) It is to be presented to God as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12. 1) that we may glorify God in it.

(3) It is to be possessed in sanctification and honour (1 Thess. 4. 4).

(4) It is to be kept under control (1 Cor. 9. 27).

This consecration of the body is simply and beautifully expressed in the hymn of Frances Ridley Havergal:

"Take my *hands* and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my *feet* and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.
Take my *voice* and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.
Take my *lips* and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee."

Just as of old the cleansed leper had his right ear, right hand thumb, and right foot great toe tipped with blood and oil, so we recognise our bodies from head to foot as Christ's, redeemed by Blood and sanctified by the Spirit.

All these will that selfsame Spirit of sanctification effect in us as we walk in the Spirit; and when this is so we shall be "wholly sanctified," that is, holy in our whole tripartite being.

THE GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8. 14).

* * * * *

"At the commandment of the Lord the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched" (Num. 9. 18).

* * * * *

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye. Be not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding" (Psa. 32. 8, 9).

CHAPTER XXXI

The Guidance of the Spirit

"O SEND out Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me" (Psa. 43. 3).

This inspired prayer of David gives us the secret of guidance. It is by the Light and the Truth. *The Holy Spirit and the Word of God.* These together so bring to us the will of our Risen Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, that He becomes to us in practice what He is in Himself, the Light and the Truth. It is by means of these that He leads and guides us in the way.

Not the Light without the Truth, nor the Truth without the Light.

Those who speak of direct guidance of the Spirit apart from the Word of God are in danger of enthusiasm.

Those who treat the Word of God as if it were a mere code of morals or text-book of ethics are in danger of materialism.

But where the Word of God is brought into personal application to our lives and conduct by the Holy Spirit, it becomes to us the Pillar of Fire and Cloud going on before to lead us in our desert journey.

This then is the guidance of the Spirit, the privilege of the sons of God; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8. 14).

But this leading is not apart from the natural means that God has given us for the direction of our conduct. These He does not set aside, but enlightens by the Spirit and the Word. So that they become spiritual and effective in us to know and do the will of God.

They are, of course, two in number, the conscience and the judgment.

The Conscience, "the candle of the Lord," is given to guide in matters of morals.

The Judgment, in matters of discretion.

In 1 Timothy 1. 19 we are bidden to hold "faith and a good conscience," lest we make shipwreck of the faith.

For the faith can only be held in a good conscience One has likened it to a lantern with a candle inside. The lantern is the good conscience and the candle the faith and testimony. If there be a crack in the lantern the light will soon be blown out.

In Psalm 25. 9 we have the promise: "The meek will He guide in judgment and the meek will He teach His way."

So that both conscience and judgment, enlightened and habitually exercised in the Word of God, will be the means used of the Spirit to guide us in matters of morals and discretion.

But these do not cover all the ground. We have need of the Spirit's guidance in many matters outside the realm of conscience (morals) or judgment (discretion), and to which the Word of God has no specific or particular application.

The children of God delight to know that their

Lord directs them in their home life, their business, their pleasures, and their service to His Name.

Every step of their journey, and in all their affairs, they desire to do His will and seek that He should make it known to them.

This He does by *conviction*, or as some has loved to call it, a "concern." He lays it upon their heart. He brings it strongly before their minds and stirs up the memory to recall it to them again and again. And as the conviction is given, so *circumstances* work together to the same end—"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

God never calls any to any of His purposes or plans but the "events fall out" accordingly. If they do not, the believer is content to wait, "for he that believeth shall not make haste," and if the cloud tarries they journey not.

But when He will, the mountains flow down at His presence, a great door and effectual is opened; a clear indication in concurring circumstance is given that the Pillar of Cloud and Fire is moving. Then must there be a quick response and ready obedience.

When light is given it must be obeyed, for light disobeyed becomes darkness (Matt. 6. 22, 23).

Let us take a simple illustration.

In the early days of the bicycle there was a secret lock devised, that needed no key. Five rings were placed side by side on which were letters embossed. These rings could be turned round and thus words of five letters could be spelt out, one letter on each ring.

There was one word, known only to the owner, which when thus made, brought the rings into such a position that the bolt that ran through them all, could be withdrawn and thus the lock be opened.

So in guidance there are five things that must all be in line if we would know the will of God. They are those above mentioned.

(1) The Word of God.
(2) The Conviction of the Spirit.
(3) The Good Conscience.
(4) The Sound Judgment.
(5) The Concurring Circumstances.

No child of God must ever outrage or go contrary to any of these, or he will miss his way.

But when the Spirit and the Word of God concur with a good conscience and sound judgment, accompanied by the falling out of circumstances, the working together of events in the providence of God, he may step out with confidence and boldness, "gathering assuredly" that he has the mind of the Lord.

The pillar of fire and cloud (Num. 9. 15-23), is the type of the Holy Spirit guiding the Lord's people through the wilderness of this world.

A few very elementary lessons from it will help us to understand the conditions of guidance by the Holy Spirit.

1. *We must submit ourselves to be led.* In other words, follow the cloud. If we are not willing to go or stay "at the commandment of the Lord," we are not seeking guidance, but our own will.

2. *We must learn to wait* if the cloud tarries. This is one of the hardest lessons for faith. We are restless

and would rush ahead, but "if the cloud tarried two days or a month or a year they journeyed not."

3. *We must obey at once,* whether by night or by day. If the cloud moved the silver trumpets called to action, and they journeyed. Obedience without delay is essential if we would not be left behind.

FREEDOM FROM THE LAW OF SIN.

"The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8. 2).

* * * * *

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from (right out of) the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7. 24, 25).

* * * * *

"If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8. 11).

* * * * *

"Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8. 23).

CHAPTER XXXII

The Law of the Spirit Freeing from the Law of Sin

"THE law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8. 2). Note the past tense! "Hath made me free." In what sense is this true?

The Apostle tells us in the seventh chapter that he found *a law*, a principle of evil in himself that tended to enslave him.

This "law of sin and death" is in his members (7. 23), it is "in the flesh" (7. 18; 8. 3).

It so reigns over him that while he does not allow it, even hates it (v. 15), and would not do it (v. 19), because being born from above, he "delights in the law of God after the inward man" (v. 22), and "with the mind serves the law of God" (v. 25), yet though "the will is present" (v. 18) the *power* is absent.

He even distinguishes between himself and this law of sin in him.

Twice he adds, "It is not I who do it, but sin that dwells in me" (vv. 17 and 20). Not excusing himself, but admitting that he is not a free agent.

So miserable does this unequal warfare (v. 23) make him that he cries out: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this dead body?"

(v. 24). His position is defined most clearly in chapter 8. 10, as we saw before.

"*If Christ be in you,*" that is, if you are a real Christian, then a double condition exists: (1) "*The body is dead because of sin,*" that is, the body has in it the law of sin and death still, but (2) "*The spirit* (being quickened) *is life because of righteousness.*"

A quickened renewed spirit in a dead body, such is the position, and will be until "the adoption" (8. 23), that hoped for event for which we wait, when at the coming of the Lord our mortal bodies will be redeemed and put on immortality, and be fashioned like unto His glorified body.

Till "the redemption of the body" the state continues, the battle rages, the opportunity of "quitting us like men" remains.

But the law of the life-giving Spirit has made us free from this law of sin and death—not *removed* it, but *given us liberty from it in triumph over it,* a better condition in which to glorify God, for surely to quit us like men and overcome in battle is nobler than to have no battle. But how made us free? Suffer three simple illustrations.

1. A father and his little son were walking in the garden in the Springtime, when the display of early beauty was at its best.

"What is gravitation, father?" asked the boy.

"Gravitation, my son, is a law or principle of nature, by which everything is attracted or drawn down to the earth. Thus, if you drop a stone or an apple, the earth draws it down, and so it falls, as we say, to the earth."

"Oh, but father," objects the child, "look at those beautiful tulips. They all go upwards. They are not drawn down."

"True, my boy; but that is because in them there is another law at work. *The law of life*, that is stronger than the law of gravitation, and has made them free from it as long as they live. See, if I destroy the life by cutting one off, it falls at once to the ground."

Thus has the law of the Spirit of Life. The Holy Spirit's energy in me set me free from the law of sin and death, which *is* (not *was*) in my members.

2. Or suppose a man travelling in a land where a tyrant reigns who forbids freedom of worship or liberty of thought or expression. He dare not sing praises or speak a word of Gospel or give so much as a tract or Testament. Oppression weighs on his spirit until he comes to the frontier. Stepping over the border he is at once in a land of liberty, free from the oppressive tyranny of inquisition and priestcraft.

So "in Christ" a man is free—the law of sin and death, though present, have no further claim. He is "freed" from their power, authority, and dominion —and at the Adoption will be free from their presence.

3. Or again. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were cast into the fiery furnace. The fierce flames were around them on every hand, but there was One present with them Who had set them free from the law of fire and heat. They walked in the midst of the fire unharmed.

So the law of the Spirit of Life has set us free from the law of sin and death.

The enjoyment of the liberty is conditioned upon

our standing fast in the liberty (Gal. 5. 1), and upon our walking in the Spirit, for the happy experience of deliverance is for them who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

What this means we shall discuss in a later chapter.

Note, then, the *Three Laws* in these chapters.

1. THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH.

An evil principle in the flesh, called by various names: "The Law of Sin," "Sin in the Flesh," or shortly, "The Flesh," "The Old Man," "The Body of Sin," "The Body of this Death," and "The Carnal Mind" or "Mind of the Flesh."

2. THE LAW OF GOD.

Contained in ordinances (as in the Ten Commandments). This law imposed upon the conscience from without could not deliver from the law of sin. Why? Not because it was not holy, just, and good, even spiritual; but because "I am carnal, sold under sin," because it was *"weak through the flesh"* (8. 3). It was a mighty weapon in a feeble, trembling hand. It could not, therefore, effect the liberty of the sinner.

3. THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS effects what the "law" could not do. It has set us free from, but not, as before remarked, *removed*, the law of sin and death. That is evident, for all saints die, the law of death is not gone, nor has the law of sin, for both are one, sin and death, for death came by sin, and will only disappear when sin, too, disappears.

The presence of the law of sin and death need not distress us if walking in the Spirit. We are set free

from its control. Sin does not reign, death does not appal. An illustration will make it clear.

The child, Benvenuto Cellini (later, the great Florentine Sculptor) once found a scorpion, and seizing it in his hand ran to his father, crying: "See my little crab!"

Instantly the father saw the awful peril of the child, and condemned the deadly thing. After some hesitation the child agreed with the father in recognising the danger and condemning the creature. Then condemned and given the right place of mortification (death), it was no more a danger. So sin, though present, if in communion with God it be condemned and mortified, will no longer harm.

THE SPIRIT AND OUR PRAYERS.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the Will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to His purpose" (Rom. 8. 26-28).

CHAPTER XXXIII

The Spirit and our Prayers

THERE is perhaps no exercise in which we need the grace of the Spirit more than in our prayer-life. We are told plainly in our text, *"We know not what to pray for as we ought."*

Were we then left to ourselves we should pray for what is not glorifying to God, as those did to whom James wrote: "Ye have not because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your pleasures" (4. 2-3).

And not only is there *ignorance* as to the matter of prayer, but *weakness* in the practice of prayer, which can only be overcome by the aid of the Spirit giving us "all *perseverance*" and importunity.

The aid of the Spirit is given to us, in Himself making intercession. "For us," though not in the original, is correctly supplied so long as we remember that the intercession is "in us," and not as the intercession of Christ, "for us" at the right hand of God.

The Spirit's intercession is both in us, with us, and for us. The unutterable groanings are ours, but produced by His work in us.

He worketh in us to will (that is, to desire), and

to do (that is, enable), the good pleasure of God (Phil. 2. 13), and these desires created in us by the Spirit are often inexpressible except by longings, sighs, and tears, they are inexpressible pangs and yearnings.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed—
The Motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.
"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear—
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near." (*Montgomery*).

Are such groanings in vain?

No, since they are produced by the Spirit's intercession, the One Who searches the heart, the Living God, understands them, knowing as He does the Spirit's mind or intention, though feebly expressed by us, for all the Spirit's intercessions are according to God's will.

How infinitely comforting is this. Even my sighs are understood, and are indeed the Spirit's work and but inarticulate expressions of the God-given desires, inwrought in us by that Spirit whose work is ever and only in the line of God's will.

And He who hears the Spirit-taught prayer, orders the circumstances of our lives, so that they, too, work together for our good (v. 28).

Then our responsibility is to *pray in the Spirit*; that is, to yield ourselves to His working in six respects.

1. IN THE STIRRING UP of our hearts to prayer. For He works in us *to will.* The natural man would go

on alone in self-confidence and self-satisfaction, but God would not have us thus independent of Him. He desires to see His children's faces lifted to Him, and so the Spirit convicts us of our need of prayer and of the grace of our Heavenly Father, who is ever ready to hear us.

2. IN THE INSPIRATION OF THE PRAYERS, both in private devotion and in public utterance, He will lead us in our prayers, bringing to mind our needs, suggesting the topics, and directing us in the will of God as we seek to give that deep attention to the Shepherd's voice, which the children of God learn to recognise and distinguish from the voice of strangers.

In prayer we must not be rash with our mouths, and must not let our hearts be hasty to utter anything before God, for God is in Heaven and we upon earth. We must therefore let our words be few (Eccles. 5. 2). Anything else is the "sacrifice of fools."

One led by the Spirit in prayer learns to wait and utter only that which is the Spirit's prompting, the true and unaffected expression of the soul's sincere desire.

That He will, and does, lead us in prayer is the blessed knowledge of all who have sought to "pray in the Spirit" and "worship by the Spirit of God."

3. IN THE EXPRESSION OF THE DESIRES, not in glowing words always, not in eloquent terms, although at times He gives enlargement and utterance when His servants lead His people in prayer, but often in those unutterable groanings in private that only He who

searcheth the heart can read, but which He does read and answer.

4. IN THE GRACE OF PERSEVERANCE. Not with many words, but by often coming.

Our Lord taught us that men ought not to faint in prayer, but continue as those who because of their importunity would not be refused. He told two parables to this end. That of *the Friend at Midnight,* who obtained as many loaves as he wanted, not because he was a friend, but because of his importunity; he would not go away until he got them. And the *Widow and the Unjust Judge,* who gained her case because she would not be driven from the judgment seat, but was continually coming till she gained her point.

5. IN THE ASSURANCE THAT THE PRAYER IS HEARD. Many instances of this truth are to be found in the autobiographies of the saints of God all down the ages. Their wrestling in prayer gave place to the full assurance that their prayer was answered, and their petition was turned to praise.

As the nobleman of Capernaum went away believing the Word that Jesus had spoken, and found that it was at that very hour that the fever left his son, so at the beginning of the supplication the commandment goes forth and the assurance is given by the Spirit that the prayer is heard.

6. IN THE REMOVAL OF THE DESIRE where it is not the Lord's will. As God said to Moses: "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto Me of this matter" (Deut. 3. 26), when he would urge his plea to enter the land.

And as the Lord said to Paul when refusing his thrice-repeated prayer for the removal of the thorn in the flesh: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

THE SPIRIT PRODUCING FRUIT.

"As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me" (John 15. 4).

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"Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be My disciples" (John 15. 8).

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"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—against such there is no law" (Gal. 5. 22, 23).

CHAPTER XXXIV

The Spirit Producing Fruit

THE Father is glorified in our producing much fruit, and that fruit is the result of abiding in Christ. "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit for without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15. 5), and His abiding in us is by His Spirit.

Therefore the fruit produced is called the Fruit of the Spirit.

Fruit is not a sudden growth. It is the result of certain abiding or continuing conditions. Let those conditions be observed and maintained and fruit is the natural and certain result.

Character, the beauty of the Lord our God upon us, true sanctity is not a sudden thing, but fruit produced in us by the Spirit. Let the conditions be right and at once the growth begins.

Let them be maintained and the growth will develop fruit, or Godly character.

For example, let a young convert abide in Christ and immediately love, joy, and peace are experienced in measure. Just as contact being made with an electric globe and a live wire, so soon are both light and power manifest.

But the young believer's spiritual life is often inconsistent and intermittent. Sometimes fervent with love, joy, and courage; at others weak and dull. He has to learn that the fruit to mature must have

time and the soul must be maintained in its abiding in Christ, so that the Spirit's gracious work in him may be unbroken.

Then the fruit matures. What was unstable becomes established, what was intermittent and changeable becomes habitual, regular, and consistent; in other words, godly character.

To become meek and lowly as our Lord was (the highest attainment in the spiritual realm), we must learn of Him; and just as one lesson will not teach us any subject perfectly, so we must be regular and habitual attendants at our Lord's school if we would be perfect as our Master.

Some have been betrayed into professing perfection or full deliverance, because at the time they speak they are happy and confident in the Lord. They forget that it is not a present experience that ensures fruit unto perfection, but *a patient continuance in well doing*. To taste of the grace of God is one thing, to be established in it and manifest it in character, habit, and regular life, is another.

Experiences and "blessings," though real gracious visitations from the Lord, are not sufficient to rest upon, nor should they lead us to glory in ourselves, as if we had a store of grace for time to come, or were yet at the end of the conflict. No. Fruit ripens slowly; days of sunshine and days of storm each add their share. Blessing will succeed blessing, and storm follow storm, before the fruit is full grown or comes to perfection.

Let us glance at the items that go to make up the fruit of the Spirit, not "fruits," for each of them is

only a part of the well-balanced character that is the fruit of the Spirit.

Love, the first, because the greatest, is fully described in 1 Corinthians 13. That chapter tells how all is vain—eloquence, prophecy, knowledge, faith that can move mountains, generosity, and even martyrdom, all useless if love be absent.

Then comes one great positive definition of love, followed by a series of negatives.

"Love suffereth long and is kind."

That is why what we call a good face bears on it the impress of two characteristics—pain and grace.

Suffering is marked upon it and that kindness which we call sympathy and graciousness.

This is not produced in a day. It has been a growth of years, the result of much exercising of the heart unto Godliness. To be loving, one must practice suffering long and being kind, in the Spirit.

Joy is not the same as happiness, nor does it consist in thrills and emotional enthusiasm.

The believer does not aim at joy, it follows faith and love as an attendant.

Those who are ever seeking "joy" in stirring meetings do not as a rule show much stability of character. They are impatient with plodding and patient continuance in well-doing.

They forsake a work taken up, they will tell you, for the Lord, as soon as some higher excitement comes along. Sound doctrine is cast aside readily when the next "happy" preacher appears. The thrills he produces are taken as an evidence of his truth.

The joy of the believer is the *joy of faith* that looks

not on the things seen, but on the unseen; that does not ask for signs and wonders, but is among the blessed who have not seen but have believed.

It is *the joy of love* that sacrifices self for the good and well-being of others.

It is *the joy of hope* that asks not present reward or satisfaction, but suffering with the Lord here below anticipates the reign with Him above.

"When fortune smiles, 'tis easy to be good,
Adversity reveals the hero-soul."

The joy of the Spirit is a joy that is unaffected by feelings or circumstances.

Peace is a peace that passeth understanding. That does not mean that it is beyond description or conception, but is better than understanding. A peace that *surpasses* understanding.

"I know not what awaits me,
God kindly veils my eyes—
O blissful lack of wisdom,
'Tis better not to know."

In the same way, the love of Christ *surpasses* knowledge (Eph. 3. 19).

Peace and the love of Christ are far, far better than all knowledge. We may not understand God's dealings, but to have His peace and His love in our hearts is worth much more, is surpassingly finer, and this is the fruit of the Spirit.

Of the rest of the nine graces enumerated, we need only say:

Three are those that affect others: longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness; and three are those that distinguish true manhood: faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.

PART VI

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29; 3. 6, 13, and 22).

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"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned. . . . He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back" (Isa. 50. 4, 5).

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"O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandment! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea" (Isa. 48. 18).

CHAPTER XXXV

Our Responsibility to Hear what the Spirit Saith

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches" (Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29; 3. 6, 13 and 22).

Seven times is the call repeated: *"He that hath an ear."* All have not "ears to hear," for sin has stopped them; but the believer has, like His Lord, had his ear opened (Isa. 50. 5), and should morning by morning have that ear wakened to hear as the instructed (learned or taught) (v. 4).

For his ear has been tipped with blood and with holy anointing oil (Lev. 14. 25-28), so that it is purged and sanctified, and can henceforth hear. As Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice." That being so, "Let him hear what the Spirit saith."

No doubt this is our first responsibility.

When Moses foretold the coming of Christ, *"That Prophet"* (Deut. 18. 18), he added: "It shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My Name I will require it of him," and since the Spirit's holy work is to bring to remembrance what the Lord has spoken and to take of the things of Christ and show them to us, it is our

privilege and responsibility to hear what the Spirit saith.

Yet in nothing do we grieve the Spirit so often, I fear, as in our failure to hear what he says.

"The Spirit speaketh expressly," we read (1 Tim. 4. 1), and that in two ways which are really one.

(1) Through the Holy Scriptures.

(2) By a personal application of the truth of God to the mind of the believer in conviction and clear guidance.

Let us ponder over these in turn.

1. THE SPIRIT SPEAKING IN THE SCRIPTURES.

We have already seen that the Scriptures are the Sword or Weapon of the Spirit. Having Himself inspired them, He uses them to effect His purposes in the hearts and minds of those who are Christ's.

The Word of God is often quoted as being the Holy Ghost speaking. For example:

Heb. 3. 7. *"The Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear His voice."* Psalm 95. 7 here quoted is thus said to be the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Heb. 9. 8. *"The Holy Ghost thus signifying* (in the Tabernacle) *that the way into the holiest of all was not yet manifest."*

Heb. 10. 15. *"Whereof the Holy Ghost is a witness to us"* (in Jeremiah 31. 33), concerning the New Covenant.

Acts 4. 25, R.V. *"The Holy Ghost by the mouth of our father David hath said"* (quoting Psa. 2. 1, 2.) "Why do the heathen rage?"

Since this is so, it is evident that to us the Scriptures are the Holy Spirit making known to us our Lord's

will. We cannot then but recognise the solemn obligation to hear and obey (for hearing has always the value of "heeding") those Sacred Writings.

That many are losing untold peace, power and blessing by not seriously doing so, is due principally to two causes.

(1) *The Word of God has not free course in them.*

I invite your most earnest attention to this expression. It occurs in the R. V. of John 8. 37, which reads: "Ye seek to kill Me because My Word hath no place (R.V., "not free course") in you."

The thought is, that the Word is restricted and limited, it is not allowed its full liberty over the mind and heart. There is not that full submission to its obedience that is needed if it is to do its mighty work, "*effectually working* in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2. 13).

The Holy Ghost is thus resisted and quenched in His gracious work.

The words of the Lord on this subject are most searching.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye *continue in My Word* then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

But to do so it must have "free course." The Spirit must be allowed to search the heart by it, as described in Hebrews 4. 12, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul (the mere natural emotions) and spirit (the quickened and renewed will) of the joints and marrow and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart.

To throw open one's entire being thus to the Spirit's application and use of the Word of God is the "Hearing what the Spirit saith" of which we speak.

(2) *The Word of God is mixed with other thoughts and ideas.*

The words of the Prophet Jeremiah (15. 19) are applicable here:

"If thou take forth the precious from the vile thou shalt be as My mouth."

It is well known that God has ever set His face against mixtures. Divers seeds (Deut. 22. 9), divers sorts of cloth (11), divers animals in ploughing (10) are alike forbidden.

Adulteration is always fatal to truth. It gives an uncertain sound at which no one prepares to battle. The awful words to the lukewarm saints at Laodicea are well known (Rev. 3. 16).

In order, therefore, to hear aright what the Spirit saith, we must close our ears to the teaching of men. We must separate what is mere tradition from that which is written in the volume of the book. Only thus can we become "as His mouth," an unspeakable honour and privilege.

2. THE SPIRIT SPEAKING BY PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THE TRUTH OF GOD TO THE MIND OF THE BELIEVER IN CONVICTION AND CLEAR GUIDANCE.

Nothing is more certain than this in the record of the early believers. We read for example: "The Spirit saith to Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8. 29). And later: "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (v. 39).

"The Spirit said unto Peter, Behold three men seek

thee," etc. (Acts 10. 19). "The Spirit (Peter says) bade me go with them, nothing doubting" (Acts 11. 12). And of Paul and Barnabas that they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia" (Acts 16. 6). And then assaying to go into Bithynia, "The Spirit suffered them not" (Acts 16. 7).

We are not told how the Spirit spoke on these occasions; it is therefore vain to speculate. Let it rest at this, that He did so in fact.

There are two methods of speaking—one to the ears and another to the heart (or inner consciousness).

Man can only reach the inner consciousness of another so as to communicate with him (with very limited exceptions) by the ear or in writing through the eye. But God is not so limited.

God can and does reach man's inner consciousness directly by His Spirit. He speaks to the heart. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits" (Rom. 8. 16).

If it is asked How? The answer must be: *"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His covenant"* (Psa. 25. 14).

That it is so the autobiographies of the saints of God, almost without exception, reveal. Godly men all down the ages confess, "I being in the way, the Lord led me." His will was so made known to them personally that they acted upon it with assurance and without doubt or misgiving. In periods of crisis on the threshold of great endeavours, or bold ventures for God, the Spirit spoke to their inner consciousness as truly as He spoke to Philip, Peter, or Paul.

Because, on the one hand, some treat the Bible as a code of morals and religious principles, without life;

and on the other hand, frivolous persons and fanatics have glibly talked of the Spirit leading them or the Lord telling them to do all kinds of excesses and vagaries, these are no reason for denying the fact that the spiritual believer walking humbly with his Lord receives personal instruction and guidance by the Spirit.

For the help of those who desire better to know this gracious experience, let us make a few simple propositions.

(*a*) There must be *a humble submission of heart* and a tenderness of conscience with a true waiting upon the Lord to know His will.

(*b*) There must be *a deep and close attention* to light given, whether through the Word or by conviction.

(*c*) When light is given, *it will be recognised as light.* That is to say, when the Lord speaks, His voice will be surely recognized. "My sheep hear My voice." Light is a *self-evident* thing, we do not have to argue about it, we know light *is* light.

(*d*) The spiritual learn to discern and *try the spirits.* The voice of their Lord is readily distinguished from the voice of a stranger.

(*e*) *No rash or hasty steps* will be taken, but much prayer and real exercise of heart will accompany any action with great peace and holy boldness.

(*f*) "If thine eye be thus single" thy whole body will be *full of light,* as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light." So said our Blessed Lord (Luke 11. 36).

Our first responsibility, then, is to hear what the Spirit saith.

(1) First by letting His Word have free course in us.

(2) By giving close attention to the convictions of the Spirit and the light that is in us (Matt. 6. 23), lest it become darkness, for light disobeyed becomes darkness.

I quote the following:

"What is it that the Spirit of God does with the truth?

"All that He does is simply to give it sway over the mind. He does not aim at doing anything more than cause the truth to dwell in the mind, clothed with the authority that properly belongs to it.

"The mind is naturally adverse to God's truth, and insists upon perverting it and degrading it and mutilating it, but the Spirit of God causes the truth to stand upon its feet and sit down upon its throne.

"The truth without the Spirit is dead, it is a defenceless carcase in the hands of men. The Spirit makes it to live and to do valiantly whatever the truth of God is intended of it to accomplish that is holiness.

"We are holy just so far as we are living in the power of the truth. The saint is just a true man."

GEO. BOWEN, Missionary in Burmah.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT.

"There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Spirit" (Acts 2. 3, 4).

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"Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said . . . " (Acts 4. 8).

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"Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost . . ." (Acts 6. 5).

* * * * *

"He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into Heaven" (Acts 7. 55).

* * * * *

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart unto the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph. 5. 17-21).

CHAPTER XXXVI

Our Responsibility to be Filled with the Spirit

THE filling of the Spirit was not confined to the Gospel age, that is, the period ushered in by Pentecost, for we read of those who were so filled before that event.

John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit from before his birth (Luke 1. 15).

Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost when she met Mary (Luke 1. 41). Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied at the naming of John (Luke 1. 6, 7).

The difference would seem to be that while the filling was in those days a special gift for a notable occasion and was probably temporary only, since Pentecost that blessing is the privilege of every believer, and may, and should be a continuing and habitual enjoyment.

Now for the first time has the command gone forth: *"Be filled with the Spirit."*

Nor is this filling to be regarded as for great and notable occasions only, but it is for the daily life, for "the trivial round, the common task."

The Christian life cannot be lived adequately or as intended by the Lord except with that infilling.

The true Christian life is impossible to the flesh. It is like Peter walking on the water, and like the three children walking in the midst of the fiery furnace; it is a new life, only livable by the power of the Spirit. It is living and walking "in the Spirit," and for that we must daily be filled with the Spirit.

Let us inquire, then, what the nature of this filling is. First of all, we must look at the expression used.

In the command of Ephesians 5. 18: "Be filled with the Spirit," there is in the original Greek no "the," and the preposition is "in." It reads, "Be filled, ἐν Πνεύματι" (in Spirit).

Of this, Dean Alford remarks (*in loco*): "The ambiguity in the preposition is owing to the peculiar meaning of Πνευμα as applied to the Christian, viz., *his own spirit dwelt in and informed by the Holy Spirit of God.* If this is so, if you are full of the Spirit, full in Spirit, there will be a joy indeed."

Therefore the meaning may be:

(1) I am to be filled *with* the Holy Ghost, or

(2) I am to be filled *by* the Holy Ghost.

In the first case the Spirit Himself, being that with which I am full, and in the other the Spirit fills me with all that He desires me to have, that with which I am filled being the gifts and graces of the Spirit.

In Acts 2. 4 it is without a preposition or article, and in the genitive case "They were all filled (of the) Holy Ghost." The same in the case of Peter (Acts 4. 8) and Stephen (Acts 6. 5 and 7. 55). Each was filled (of the) Holy Ghost.

Perhaps, then, as Dean Alford suggests, the two may be blended in our thoughts and we may under-

stand the command as: *Be filled in your spirit by the Holy Spirit with all that He has to give and teach.*

This would correspond with the prayer of the Apostle in the same Epistle (3. 19): "That ye may be filled with all the fulness of God."

There is in the Epistle to the Colossians, chapter 3, verses 16-25, a passage, parallel in many respects, with that in Ephesians 5. 18 to 6. 9.

It contains a similar call to admonish one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and to give thanks, followed by particular addresses to wives, husbands, children, servants, and masters, and in the same order.

But in place of the command: "Be filled with the Spirit," there is the command: *"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom"* (v. 16).

This is striking, and suggests that in practice the two things are but different aspects of the same experience.

For the Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit, and to be filled by the Spirit is to have the Word of Christ dwelling in us richly with all the wisdom from on high that, as we have seen, is ministered to us through that Word, by that same Spirit.

Let us look closely, then, at the whole sentence in Ephesians 5, which begins at verse 17, and continues unbroken to the end of verse 21. It contains the following points. We are:

(1) To understand the Lord's will (v. 17).
(2) Not to seek natural excitement (wine) (v. 18).
(3) To be filled in Spirit (v. 18).
(4) To stir one another with spiritual songs (v. 19).

(5) To make melody with the heart to the Lord (v. 19).

(6) To give thanks in all.

(7) To show mutual forbearance.

Does not this sevenfold exhortation indicate to us how we are to seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit. He will fill us with:

The knowledge of our Lord's will,

With holy joy,

With praise and melody,

With the Spirit of mutual love and yieldingness.

We are, on our part, *to be filled*. That must be:

(1) By *deep attention to His teaching* and conviction.

(2) By *throwing open our whole being* to His gracious operations.

(3) By seeing that *nothing is allowed to hinder*, pervert, or resist His will.

(4) By *allowing no natural excitement* or emotional stimulants to usurp His place and teaching.

One feature of this filling must not be overlooked. With any special demand came a fresh infilling, as in the cases cited above (Acts 2. 3, 4; 4. 8; 6. 5; and 7. 55).

Sometimes we are in the will of God called to efforts or to work that we feel to be altogether extraordinary and beyond our usual experience. We face them with a deep consciousness of our utter insufficency, and that nothing but a special enduement from on high will suffice for them. Then it is that faith may rise to this glorious truth, that to be filled with the Spirit for such special need is not only our responsibility, but since all our Lord's commands

are enablings, in response to faith, that the gracious infilling will be given sufficient for every need.

Faith never appeals in vain to Christ. As ever at the touch of faith, virtue (power) comes from Him, and is ministered to us by the Spirit.

Since, then, grace is sufficient, since the supply is unlimited, and since the power ever comes in response to faith, be filled with the Spirit.

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT.

"Ye have received of us how ye ought to *walk and to please God*" (1 Thess. 4. 1).

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"This I say then, *Walk in the Spirit,* and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5. 16).

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"As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so *walk ye in Him*" (Col. 2. 6).

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"*Walk in Love,* as Christ also hath loved" (Eph. 5. 2).

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"*Walk in the Light*" (1 John 1. 7).
"*Walk as children of Light*" (Eph. 5. 8).
"*Walk in Truth*" (3 John 4).
"*We walk by Faith*" (2 Cor. 5. 7).
"*Walk in Wisdom*" (Gal. 4. 5).
"*Walk circumspectly*" (Eph. 5. 15).
"*Walk worthy of God*" (1 Thess. 2. 12).

CHAPTER XXXVII

Our Responsibility to Walk in the Spirit

THE justification of the sinner is not made dependent on his walk. No theologian would commit himself to such a word as "Walk in such and such a way and you shall be justified." No, justification is the free gift of grace, conditioned on neither work nor walk.

But with the believer it is different. God asked nothing of the lost and guilty rebel but He does ask something of His children after that they are justified and born again, and that is, that they should walk by the teaching, conviction, and guidance of His Spirit and Word.

Indeed He has made the enjoyment of His full salvation depend upon this walk.

While justification is not by works, salvation (full deliverance) is to be worked out with fear and trembling, as He works in His child by the Spirit (Phil. 2. 12, 13).

Again, while justification is not conditioned on walk, the blessing of deliverance from the flesh is to be enjoyed by walking in the Spirit (Gal. 5. 16).

How important, then, to know in experience how to walk in the Spirit—to walk and to please God.

Since in this day of carnal pleasure, when lust that appeals to eyes, ears, and mind abounds on every

hand so that many are slaves to the flesh, and therefore are crying out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" it is well to be clear as to the answer.

Let it be written in letters of gold on the tablet of the heart: *"Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."*

There is no other way, for this is God's way, and is in the inspired words of the Spirit.

What does it mean?

1. FIRST, THEN, IT IS A WALK.

That is, an habitual and continuous practice—an attitude maintained towards God.

In the 25th verse of the same chapter we have the words: "Let us walk in the Spirit." In this case the word *"walk"* is changed. It is στοιχῶμεν, which means to "walk in rank," to "keep step with." It is translated elsewhere (Acts 21. 24) to "walk orderly," and (Rom. 4. 12) "walk in the steps of."

The sense is clear, the walk in the Spirit is a walk that is step by step with Christ.

No longer wayward or erratic, but regular, steady, and continuous. Step by step by the Spirit, with Christ. His the power and grace, His the word of command and example, and ours the response of faith and obedience. It is this walk that pleases God. It is in this walk that deliverance from the flesh is found.

But some may object: Does not it say "the law of the Spirit of life *hath made me free* from the law of sin and death." Is this not a definite point and a real experience? Have not the saints all down the

ages witnessed to a "blessing" that has made this deliverance a present and glorious fact?

Certainly, it is so, but however sudden and real may be the blessing of adjustment, of deliverance; however definite the act of faith, it is nevertheless *an act that must become an attitude.* It must, of course, be maintained.

The soldier of Christ falls into line, and the command is "Forward, March," and he keeps step with His Lord in the energy of His Spirit, and thus the powers of darkness are overcome under the Saviour Leader.

2. IT IS A WALK "IN THE SPIRIT."

The R.V. changes the preposition to "by" in each case:

Verse 16. "Walk by the Spirit."

Verse 18. "If ye be led by the Spirit."

Verse 25. "If we live *by* the Spirit let us also walk *by* the Spirit."

There is no preposition in either case in the original, always the dative standing alone, and no definite article.

"Walk (by) Spirit," "Led (by) Spirit."

This *By the Spirit* must then mean:

(1) By the *power* of the Spirit, for He works mightily in those that believe. He is the enabling Spirit.

(2) By the *teaching and conviction* of the Spirit, for He throws light on the next step (and often, only the next step), and we have but to obey and walk in the light. That is why the walk is called elsewhere, "Walking in the light" and "Walking as children of light," *i.e.*, enlightened children

(3) By *the guidance* of the Spirit, for there must be no self-will, but submission to be led. Those thus led are not "under law" (v. 18). They are free from all other constraint and fear. He alone leads them.

(4) By the *love* of the Spirit, for the flesh is full of malice, envy, and unlove, and only as the Spirit moves to love is the flesh overcome.

He points the way of grace and kindness, and says, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

The believer yields to the way of love, and thus overcomes the malice and uncharitableness of the flesh. This is why that same walk is called, "Walking in love."

(5) This walk *assures a victory* over the lusts of the flesh. This is the assurance and promise: "Ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." But in order that this may be so there must be *the obedience of faith.* The quick heart-response, "Yea, Lord" to His convictions.

In my tract, "Free Indeed" (C.S.S.M., 5 Wigmore St., W.1, 1½d. post free), I have enlarged on this subject. I may be allowed to repeat an illustration from real life that I use in it:

"A girl who lived with her father was taught by him to drink. She would sit by him in the evening as he soaked himself with spirits. Often he took the half-melted piece of sugar from his glass and opening her little mouth would put it in. Though it brought tears to her eyes, she learned to love the spirit, and before she was of age she was a hopeless drunkard. A life of sin and shame on the streets followed, and all seemed lost. Delirium nearly ended her life, but she got over it and struggled on in abject misery.

"One day a Christian woman, who had often pleaded with her in vain, led her to the Saviour's feet. She believed and called on the Name of the Lord, and rose reconciled to God and free. . . . O happy day!

"As she related the story to me long afterwards in my office, her face was lit with a holy radiance and joy. She said, 'It seems like an awful dream from which I have awakened; I can hardly believe I am the same person.'

"What a wonderful Saviour is ours!

"I said to her, 'Tell me then your secret. How do you continue thus in happy liberty and joy?'

"Her reply was, 'I can tell you in a word. It is prompt obedience.' *Prompt obedience*! Not the obedience of law, of fear, but that of love to the Saviour who died, who saved and set free; the obedience from the heart, that fears nothing more than to grieve the indwelling Spirit."

"This I say, then, Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

MORTIFY THE DEEDS OF THE BODY.

"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8. 13).

* * * * *

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience, in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them" (Col. 3. 5-7).

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Our Responsibility by the Spirit to Mortify the Deeds of the Body

THE believer's relation to the flesh is described by two expressions, one in the completed past tense, the other in the continuing present.

(1) "They that are Christ's HAVE CRUCIFIED the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5. 24).

(2) "If ye by the Spirit DO MORTIFY the deeds of the body ye shall live" (Rom. 8. 13).

The two expressions, then, are "have crucified" and "do mortify." A past act and a present attitude.

Let us consider them in turn.

(1) "They that are Christ's HAVE CRUCIFIED the flesh" (Gal. 5. 24).

According to Romans 6 the faith that the believer reposed in Christ when he fled to Him to lay hold of the hope set before him in the Gospel, not only brought him forgiveness, but joined him to the Lord. He became united to Christ.

So really is this so that he can henceforth reckon himself dead with Him, buried with Him, and risen with Him to newness of life.

His death he reckons his own death. He sees his "old man" (all that he is according to the flesh) *crucified with Christ,* so that the body of sin might be "annulled" or "rendered inoperative" (Καταργηθῇ), a word translated elsewhere "cumber" (Luke 13. 7),

"make without effect" (Rom. 3. 3), "make void" (Rom. 3. 31), "bring to nought" (1 Cor. 1. 28).

In the reckoning of faith his old man was crucified, so that he need not serve sin henceforth.

To this fact he responds with all the whole-hearted consent of faith. He has thus "crucified the flesh." He has given it *the place of total rejection* in his life.

He has cried of it, "Away with it, let it be crucified!" Henceforth it, with all its passions and desires, shall have no place and play no part in his life.

Is this really so? Has that past tense been realised in effect? Can each of us truly say: "I have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts?"

If not, see to it at once. For until it is so the second cannot follow. Having crucified, he then:

(2) MORTIFIES *the deeds of the body by the Spirit* (Rom. 8. 13).

The word "mortify" means to kill. In the same chapter it is translated "killed" (v. 36). We are, therefore, to put to death any motions of that "flesh" or "old man" or "body of sin" which we have "crucified" or allocated to total rejection and death. The sentence of death is to be carried into execution daily, hourly, in the energy of the Spirit.

The expression "deeds of the body" needs some explanation.

There are "motions of sin" in our bodies which are involuntary. So much so that Paul could say of them: "It is no more I that do them, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7. 17 and 20). Of course when the consent of the will is given to such "lustings"

then it is I that do them; but if an immediate response of the obedience of faith is given to the Spirit's warnings and the deed of the body is instantly mortified, killed, then life and peace are undisturbed.

Notice the expressions used.

1. *"If by the Spirit."* The R.V. gives this word spirit a small "s," making it refer to our spirits, but the meaning is the same as we saw before (p. 186). *Our* spirits would be inoperative and ineffective but for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. It is He alone who enables us to slay the intruding enemy thought.

2. *"Ye do mortify."* There must be no dallying with these motions of sin.

> "The battle rages cruel, fierce and long,
> We *hold no parley* with the powers of wrong;
> In Christ our Saviour—Stronger than the strong,
> More than conquerors, more than conquerors."

No, the death-blow must be sharp and decisive. To hesitate is to be defeated. Agag must not be spared. There must be no pitying our darling sins, they must be "hewn in pieces" before the Lord. The deeds of the body must be mortified.

3. *"The deeds of the body."* They are so various, they come in such pleasing forms, even is such subtle disguises; but their origin will be detected, for at their approach the Spirit will convict, conscience the sentinel will give the alarm, and the traitor will be known; and if not boldly met and promptly mortified, our lack of faith and courage will grieve the Holy Spirit.

4. *"Ye shall live."* That is, of course, enjoy real life; living as it is to those who "mind the Spirit"—for "the minding of the Spirit is life and peace."

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4. 30).

* * * * *

"How oft did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel" (Psa. 78. 40, 41).

* * * * *

"He (Jesus) looked round . . . being grieved for the hardness of their hearts" (Mark 3. 5).

CHAPTER XXXIX

Our Responsibility Not to Grieve the Holy Spirit

NOTHING helps us to think of the Holy Spirit as a Person—and one who, being God, is Love—as the fact that He can be grieved.

He is not easily grieved. Love never is, for "love suffereth long and is kind," and God the God of all grace, is "slow to anger and of great mercy."

Love is not readily offended, and can have compassion, as our Great High Priest does, upon the ignorant and them that are out of the way. Let us not think, then, of our Holy and Blessed Paraclete and Comforter as a man, uncertain and capricious, with changing feelings and moods. Alas, we are liable to do so, and deserve the reproach: "Thou thoughtest I was altogether such a One as thyself!" Rather let us seek to conceive the meaning of perfect love, for that love casts out all fear and He sheds it abroad.

The love of the Spirit is the love of Christ. Let us not then walk in uncertainty or fearfulness, but allow the gracious Spirit to shed the love of God abroad in our hearts. "The certainty of love that sets our hearts at rest."

Yet, He may be grieved.

HOW DO WE PERCEIVE IT?

1. *By the loss of Joy.* For our joy is joy in the Holy Ghost and not a mere natural product, mere happiness that depends on the happenings of life.

His office is to reveal the unseen realities to faith, and thus our joy is the joy of faith. But if grieved He ceases to do this, and the sunshine ceases, as when the sun is behind a cloud.

2. *By the loss of Peace.* Irritation takes the place of calm again. The soul is like the troubled sea, that cannot rest. For when He is grieved He ceases to make the storm a calm.

3. *By the loss of Power.* Samson may stretch himself as at other times, but his power is gone while the Spirit is grieved. As Samson "wist it not," so one may go on with outward activities and with apparent success, but if the gracious Spirit is grieved within us, all real fruit fails.

This is often evident first in a reluctance to speak to souls individually. The worker is out of touch, and neither love to souls, nor zeal for their salvation, is in evidence as at other more blessed times.

4. *Even by the loss of Assurance,* for argue as one may, or quote comforting Scriptures, they will not avail without that inner witness of the Spirit with our spirits, which is both so precious and so mysterious. Sad examples of the loss of assurance are around us.

5. *Even by loss of Health.* It was so with the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11. 30). It was so with the "grown weary" one of James 5. 15 ("sick = Κὰμνοντα, as in Hebrews 12. 3; Rev. 2. 3).

There is no vigour of health and strength to labour like that of the ungrieved Spirit, but when He is grieved this support is gone, and failure results, both spiritual and physical.

But this need not be so. The Spirit is not grieved hastily nor for unknown and undiscoverable reasons. He will convict and warn many times e're He smites the heart in His wrath. A very little self-examination is sufficient generally to discover why He is grieved. The prayer: "Search me, O God, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me into the way of life everlasting," will bring a speedy answer.

WHAT IS THAT WHICH GRIEVES HIM?

1. *Positive Sin.* The context makes this abundantly clear. Look at the things enumerated in Ephesians 4. 24-32.

(*a*) Lying (v. 25).

(*b*) Anger that yielded to, is sin (v. 26).

(*c*) Any concession to the Devil (v. 27).

(*d*) Theft and covetousness (v. 28).

(*e*) Corrupt talk (v. 29).

(*f*) Bitterness and all forms of temper (v. 31).

(*g*) Unkindness and the want of a forgiving spirit (perhaps the most common of all failure among saints) (v. 32).

No child of God can allow any of these and expect to retain an ungrieved Spirit.

2. *Continuance in what should be known to be contrary to God's will.*

Ignorance is excusable in the young and immature, but becomes a guilty thing when "wilful ignorance" (2 Peter 3. 5), or the result of failure to listen to the

repeated exercise and conviction of the Spirit.

Thus the Pharisees were hypocrites, not because they were not earnest and zealous, but because they blinded their eyes to truths they might and should have known.

If such a course is persisted in it grieves the Spirit. As, for example:

(*a*) *The practice of things contrary to the Word of God* and easily discoverable to be so, if proper diligence were given to inquire.

(*b*) *The continuing in associations* dishonouring to God and clearly out of line with the Word of God.

(*c*) *The allowance of unholy mixtures.* A refusal to come out and be separate; to separate the precious from the vile.

(*d*) *The shirking and avoidance of the Cross.* That is, the reproach attaching to the open confession of the Name of and obedience to Christ. These things account for many a barren fig tree.

3. *Neglect is a common cause of the Spirit being grieved.*

As when the Word of God is seldom read; prayer is hurried and unreal; the means of grace are neglected, and the assembling together allowed to be irregular and even infrequent.

And what shall be done to recover from this state?

(1) Let a period of prayer and fasting be arranged that by humbling and *self-examination* before God the reason may be clearly known.

(2) Let confession and restoration to peace and grace be accompanied by *self-judgment* and repentance (as described in 2 Cor. 2. 11), that things may at once

be put right and that we may be clear in the matter.

(3) Let *straight paths* and regular habits be adopted for the future, that the evil may not recur.

So shall the Spirit of the Lord be ungrieved and His joy, peace, enlightenment, liberty, and power be our habitual and happy portion.

QUENCHING THE SPIRIT.

"Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5. 19).

* * * * *

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you, for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light that ye may be children of light" (John 12. 35, 36).

* * * * *

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee" (1 Tim. 4. 14).

CHAPTER XL

Our Responsibility Not to Quench the Spirit

Quench not the Spirit (1 Thess. 5. 19).

WE have seen how the Lord likened the work of the Spirit to a spring (or well) of water in us, and to an overflowing stream emanating from us.

These figures help us to understand the meaning of quenching the Spirit.

The well may be choked so that the Living Spring within is not able to spring up to new life.

The rivers may be dammed so that they no longer flow out to refresh and enliven those around us.

Spiritual life is hindered.

Service is prevented.

The Philistines, we read, stopped the wells that Isaac digged. These Philistines were residents in the land from which later they should have been totally driven and for ever excluded. They represent those things in our lives that should have been "laid aside," and should have been once for all given the place of total rejection ("crucified"), so that we should no longer "live in them" or be occupied with them.

But, being allowed to remain, they choke the wells of life and service. They quench the Spirit, sup-

pressing and hindering His activities in us. In particular, then the Spirit may be quenched:

1. *By neglecting to respond to His calls to new life and active service.*

Thus the slumbering, indolent believer is called to awake out of sleep, to arise and shine, but he listlessly turns over and seeks his sleep again.

His vineyard is neglected, and is like that described in Proverbs 24. 31: "Lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face of it, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

Evil habits had not been uprooted in this mansoul, and separation (the wall) had ceased to protect it.

Life, the golden but swiftly passing opportunity, is neglected, and nothing of fruit appears. Every exercise of heart, all convictions of the Spirit are quenched, stifled, and disregarded. Searching words that moved the heart at the time are forgotten, and deadly indolence not only grieves but quenches every activity and sign of life in the Spirit.

"Life's golden day is with us,
The morning sun is high—
But time for loving service,
Is quickly passing by.
Let us not waste in pleasure,
Or in uncertainty—
Our birthright from the Saviour—
LIFE'S OPPORTUNITY."

2. *By refusing to receive and obey fresh light that is given us.*

Jesus said (John 12. 36), "While ye have the light believe in the light, that ye may be the sons of light." As we read the Word of God with prayer

for the teaching of the Spirit, fresh light is given to us. Then we should believe and act upon it; by so doing we become "sons of light;" but if we refuse the light, the Spirit is quenched. It is as though we put an extinguisher over the candle He lights, and the light becomes darkness.

We are responsible to receive and obey the light given to us.

No preconceived ideas or prejudices should prevent us following the light, rejoicing in it, and becoming "sons of light" (enlightened sons).

3. *By neglecting or refusing to act in love.*

Love is in the upspringing well. Not only life but love. It is shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit. These promptings to act in love are very real, generous instincts, tender thoughts for others, suggestions of some help and kindness that might readily be done. These are the Spirit's work. They should not be quenched. If acted upon many would be provoked to love and good works, many peacemakers (real children of God) would be found. Just as the flesh lusts to malice, envy, bitterness, and evil speaking, so the Spirit prompts to gentleness, kindness, and goodness.

Alas! these gracious motions are allowed to pass unheeded and unfulfilled. The time is not convenient; one is weary, or it's not one's business, and other such thoughts quench the Spirit's love.

4. *By refusing service that is set before us as an open door.*

No believer ever finds all doors of service shut.

Some door of opportunity is open, and the Spirit's

gracious voice is heard saying: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door." Every opportunity is a door that may be entered, and the repeated passing by on the other side is quenching the Spirit.

"As we have opportunity, let us do good unto *all* men."

Opportunities are there and good may be done, but, like Jonah, we may flee from the presence of the Lord, or, like the son that causeth shame, may sleep in harvest.

Do not wait for some great thing. Remember, the great things are only for those who have learnt by doing little things. To be faithful in much we must have been faithful in little.

Rather let us be zealous of good works and careful to maintain good works. Let the rivers of living water flow; do not hinder or quench them.

Take the Lord for our example. He *must* be about His Father's business, and so He pleased not Himself, but went about doing good. Let us go and do likewise.

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